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## Understanding the impact of emotional stress on crisis decision making

Sawatzky, Noel Allan

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**KING'S COLLEGE OF LONDON**

**MPhil/PhD Thesis**

Name: Noel Allan Sawatzky

Student# 1668743

E-mail: [noel.sawatzky@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:noel.sawatzky@kcl.ac.uk)

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## **ABSTRACT**

Decision making often varies from the rational in situations of high risk and uncertainty. In the most extreme of forms, policymakers and leaders of major organizations often consider military intervention that has the potential to cause war. Taking this into consideration, research of the involvement of stress in decision making by Irving Janis and Leon Mann, is relevant to understanding the kinds of departures of rationality that are routinely witnessed in foreign policy behavior. The core assumption of Janis and Mann's motivational model maintains that highly stressful foreign policy decisions may provoke non-rational responses. A problem with their "conflict model" of decision making is that Janis and Mann theorize policymaker stress during crisis is derived from decision deliberation, leading to a circular approach. Janis and Mann's circularity occurs because their model states that stress is caused by the demand for decision making in certain conditions, while also specifying that dysfunctional decision making behavior is caused by the same stress. The key contribution of this research project will be the reformulation of Janis and Mann's crisis model in an effort to circumvent this circularity. This particular advancement will make the construct more rigorous and empirically useful to the study of decision making.

The main objective of this research project will be the development of an independent measure of decision maker stress levels. This will be accomplished by conducting a psychological study of policymakers under pressure in case studies of crisis, focusing on decision making conditions and their influence on cognitive processing. An independent measure of stress can be specifically devised by evaluating policymaker statements for cognitive complexity in information processing. When compared to complexity in non-stressful situations, the analysis of decision maker cognitive complexity in conditions of crisis will provide an effective independent measure of the decision making conditions in which foreign policy choices take place. This will enable the opportunity for focused study of policymaker behavior and decisions. Case studies will also provide a forum for exploring the behavioral pathologies that Janis and Mann specify and examining the quality of decisions executed in crisis. The findings of this research will prove to be a valuable addition to the Janis and Mann conflict model and ultimately serve to combine, or bridge, cognitive and motivational psychology by using cognitive complexity to help improve a motivational model of decision making.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS AND CHAPTER OUTLINE

Chapter 1 – Introduction: The first chapter will identify the central problem that Janis and Mann’s decision making model has with circularity and discuss how it can be addressed through the development of an independent measure of stress. A substantial review of literature will serve to frame the research focusing on Janis and Mann and cognitive complexity, while also demonstrating originality.

Chapter 2 – Theory and method: This section will discuss the theory of cognitive complexity, while also describing the method of using integrative complexity to develop an independent measure of stress. The second chapter will additionally explain the methodology of how decision maker stress levels, independent of behavior and decision results, can be specifically deduced by analyzing cognitive complexity in specific cases of foreign policy crisis.

Chapter 3 – Case one data set: This chapter will comprise the first case study measurements of cognitive complexity in foreign policy crisis. Cognitive complexity will be measured in both pre-crisis and crisis conditions during the 1948 Berlin blockade, serving to highlight changes in policymaker integrative complexity levels over the course of the crisis.

Chapter 4 – Case one findings: In this chapter, I will attempt to make links between complexity and behavior during the different phases of crisis to determine if higher or lower complexity, i.e. stress, leads to different types of decisions. I can do this by following Janis and Mann’s model, determine which condition the policymaker finds themselves in using the decision maker’s own assessment, and assess if their understanding changes during the crisis. This case will endeavor to provide sufficient evidence showing links across stress, complexity, and behavior.

Chapter 5 – Case two data set: This chapter will comprise the second case study measurements of cognitive complexity in foreign policy crisis. Pre-crisis and crisis conditions of cognitive complexity will be measured in the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, serving to highlight changes in leadership integrative complexity over the course of a different crisis.

Chapter 6 – Case two findings: In this chapter, I will again attempt to make links between complexity and behavior during the different phases of crisis to see if higher or lower complexity, or stress, leads to different types of decisions. Similarly, I will follow Janis and Mann’s model, determine which condition the policymaker finds themselves in using the decision maker’s own assessment, and assess if their understanding changes during the crisis. This case will similarly seek to provide sufficient evidence showing links across stress, complexity, and behavior.

Chapter 7 – Reformulation of Janis and Mann: The seventh chapter will focus on the research findings, highlighting links between stress, complexity, and behavior to demonstrate sufficient grounds for a reformulation of Janis and Mann’s decision making model to include an independent measure of stress.

Chapter 8 – Conclusion: The final chapter will summarize the study, highlight lessons learned, and capture opportunities for further research that have been identified during the course of the project.

Appendix A – Data set from the Berlin crisis (March-July 1948), scoring the integrative complexity of key decision makers.

Appendix B – Data set from the Cuba crisis (July-October 1962), scoring the integrative complexity of key decision makers.

References – Summary of major works used in this project.

## CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

Decisions involving peace and war are likely to provoke great stress. They accordingly have the potential to deviate the most from rational decision making. The models of decision making that are most appropriate to understanding such deviance are those that consider motivated bias.<sup>2</sup> Thus, this research project will focus on the work of Irving Janis and Leon Mann who have constructed an important motivational model of decision making beginning with the assumption that policymakers are emotional beings, not rational calculators. Janis and Mann contend that important decisions generate conflict and psychological stress when a decision maker realizes that there is risk of serious loss associated with any available course of action that they choose to take.<sup>3</sup> More often than not, a policymaker will respond to these situations by procrastinating, rationalizing, or denying responsibility for the decision. These affective responses to stress are believed to detract from the quality of decision making.<sup>4</sup>

### WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

Situations in foreign policy crisis have outcomes which are often too numerous to count. Subsequently, there are myriad reasons for foreign policy crisis decisions resulting in peace or war. While this study focuses on only one aspect of why crisis decision making goes right or wrong, the effects of psychological stress on choice are often overlooked in the study of foreign policy crisis decision making. For the purposes of this research, “successful” foreign policy crisis decisions are considered to be those that result in crisis resolution or conditions of peace and will be the primary focus of this study.

While the research of Janis and Mann is important to the study of crisis decision making in that it provides a comprehensive theory of how policymakers cope with dilemmas and conflicted choices, there is a problem with the Janis and Mann “conflict model” that needs attention. Janis and Mann identify that difficult decisions create conditions that are the paramount motivational source of dysfunctional behavior, eventually leading to poor political choices. Despite their analysis of how policymakers arrive at decisions, Janis and Mann’s model of decision making is problematic because it presents circularity between conditions of stress and behavior. Janis and Mann’s issue can be addressed by constructing a measure of stress independent of the behavior it is intended to explain. This development will remove circularity, allowing opportunity for a reformulation of Janis and Mann that will make their behavioral model more precise and practical to the study of decision making.

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<sup>2</sup> Lebow, R. N. *Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crisis*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), 102.

<sup>3</sup> Janis, I.L., Mann, L. *Decision Making: A Psychological Analysis of Conflict, Choice, and Commitment*, (New York: The Free Press, 1977), 15.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 15.

## RESEARCH QUESTION

The novelty of this project lies specifically in the construction of a measure of stress independent of its effects. Considering the circularity present in the work of Irving Janis and Leon Mann's conflict model of decision making, an independent measure of stress will be useful in application to the study of crisis decisions when using the Janis and Mann construct. While Janis and Mann's theory is more comprehensive concerning addressing behavior that is counterproductive to good decision making, this research will focus specifically on an effort to answer the question:

"Is decision making stress related to the behavior that Janis and Mann associate with motivated bias?"

In their model of decision making, Janis and Mann specify that the product of stress is directly related to the deliberation in which leaders are engaged, resulting in the foreign policy behavior that we observe documented in history. Janis and Mann use foreign policy behavior observations as a measure of decision maker stress levels and in doing so, engage in a circularity alleging that it is the stress over a policy decision that produces the observed behavior. The development of an accurate measure of stress, independent from the behavior that it is meant to describe, will highlight various levels of decision maker mental tension, pressure, and strain which can then be utilized separately to examine decision making behavior that is instrumental in the execution of eventual choice.

## ARGUMENT AND OBJECTIVE

My argument identifies that Janis and Mann's conflict model is a circular construct and my objective will be to develop an independent measure of stress as a solution to this problem. The focus of this research will be the initial phase of Janis and Mann's theory, specifying that depending upon the context, stress produces four kinds of behavior responses when it comes to information processing and decision making. These behaviors are generally associated with avoidance of risk and occur when making decisions that involve persisting with or departing from the status quo, avoiding decisions when there are no good options, and making decisions only when forced into positions in which they must be made in such a limited time that the decision quality is degraded. Janis and Mann define these responses as dysfunctional behavior and identify their cause to be psychological stress rising from specific decision conditions. Because of this construct, an accurate measure of stress is needed that is independent of the behavior it is meant to describe. To accomplish this objective, I will turn to the study of cognitive complexity for the purposes of evaluating psychological stress.

As Janis and Mann contend that a rise in stress levels can bring problematic behavior, absent physiological measurements of decision maker conditions, cognitive complexity is a valuable tool that can be used as a measure of decision maker stress. In the field of decision making, the psychological study of decision makers under pressure has proven to be useful during the analysis of international crises, especially when attempting

to understand decision conditions in the context of foreign policy crisis. These high stress situations have been found to have the greatest impact on complexity because it is under these conditions that the stakes are highest and the risks greatest.<sup>5</sup>

In these unique situations, decision makers are found to be under conditions of intense pressure and stress for numerous reasons. From a motivational perspective, there is often a perceived threat to important values and the actions of other participants sometimes appear to become more hostile.<sup>6,7</sup> During times of crisis, there is often a dramatic increase in the perceived need to make rapid decisions.<sup>8,9</sup> From a cognitive account, the volume of information to be processed by decision makers grows as there is a greater exchange of communications both internally and with external counterparts.<sup>10,11,12</sup> The combination of an imperative demand for crucial decisions to be made quickly and correctly with large amounts of information is a form of psychological stress that can be expected to reduce the information processing complexity of the individuals involved.<sup>13,14,15</sup> Thus, referencing these findings in the study of crisis decision making, the decline of a policy maker's cognitive complexity in critical situations is a related sign of stress.<sup>16</sup>

Considering the relationship between declining complexity in conditions of increasing stress, the interest will now focus on complexity and its association with Janis and Mann's behavioral pathologies. In the field of judgment and decision making, a demonstrable relationship can be found between the decline of a decision maker's complexity and the kind of dysfunctional behavioral responses Janis and Mann identify in specific conditions. As leaders are faced with decision conflict in crisis situations, where available alternatives are seldom devoid of significant risk, Janis and Mann specifically specify that the resulting conditions of high stress sometimes cause dysfunctional behavior responses. Considering Janis and Mann's association of these behavior patterns to conditions of high stress, a relationship can also be established between Janis and Mann's dysfunctional behavior pathologies and a policy maker's decline in complexity. These non-adaptive responses are described by Janis and Mann to include behavior characterized by avoidance, denial, or impulsive decision making under time pressure, when no good decision options are available to a policy maker in a state of decision conflict.

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<sup>5</sup> Guttieri, K., Wallace, M., Suedfeld, P. Integrative Complexity of American Decision Makers in the Cuban Missile Crisis, *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 1995, 595-621.

<sup>6</sup> Robinson, J.A., Hermann, C.F., and Hermann, M.G. "Search under crisis in political game and in simulation" in *Theory and Research on the Causes of War*, edited by D.G. Pruitt and R.C. Snyder, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1969), 88-94.

<sup>7</sup> Holsti, O.R. *Crisis, Escalation, War*. (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1972).

<sup>8</sup> Young, O.R. *The Intermediaries: Third Parties in International Crises*. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1967).

<sup>9</sup> Holsti. *Crisis, Escalation, War*.

<sup>10</sup> Holsti, O.R., Brody, R.A., and North, R.C. "The management of international crisis: affect and action in American-Soviet relations." *Journal of Peace Research*, 1964, 3-4: 170-190.

<sup>11</sup> Holsti, *Crisis, Escalation, War*.

<sup>12</sup> Paige, G.D. "Comparative case analysis of crisis decisions: Korea and Cuba," in *International Crises: Insights from Behavioral Research*, edited by C.F. Hermann, (New York: Free Press, 1972), 41-55.

<sup>13</sup> Holsti, *Crisis, Escalation, War*.

<sup>14</sup> Selye, H. *The Stress of Life*. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1956).

<sup>15</sup> Schroder, H.M., Driver, M.J., and Streufert, S. *Human Information Processing*. (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1967).

<sup>16</sup> Suedfeld, P., Bluck, S. Changes in complexity prior to surprise attacks. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 1988, 32:626-635.



As complexity declines, the several kinds of maladaptive behavior that Janis and Mann refer to result in deviations from rational decision making that often lead to complications in situations of foreign policy crisis. To the extent that the behavior is present, it diminishes the probability that effective policies will be implemented or that perilous crisis situations will be resolved without conflict.<sup>17,18</sup> For the specific purposes of analyzing behavior performance in crisis, situations that characterize most crises can be placed into the context of Janis and Mann's decision behavioral pathologies. These situations are related to information overload, conflicting information that present obstacles to chosen policies, and time pressure.<sup>19</sup>

To illustrate, communication between high-level policy makers has been researched prior to the outbreak of violence. In specific conditions of crisis, channels of communication become progressively overloaded and an increasing amount of information flows through nontraditional channels.<sup>20</sup> The cognitive account of information overload occurs when a decision maker attempts to process an overwhelming amount of data. For Janis and Mann this leads to defensive avoidance and more specifically procrastination when the realization is made that the amount of data far exceeds the processing capabilities of the policy maker. The decision maker becomes selectively inattentive to threat cues and avoids thinking about the oncoming decision by distracting themselves with other activities and even developing fatalistic beliefs that support a precariously optimistic outlook.<sup>21</sup> This pathology often causes leaders to take more time to make decisions and make frequent mistakes in the process often because of confusion. These delays tend to consume increasing amounts of time as crisis progresses and make an already valuable commodity even more precious.

In crisis situations, conflicting information causes communication to become focused more internally versus externally and the amount of novel information tends to decrease.<sup>22</sup> In this case the need for cognitive consistency in the presence of conflicting information and insensitivities to new information that might provide warning for needed change, causes policymaker defensive avoidance for Janis and Mann. Over time, the decision maker is likely to use available information that has become comfortable for the purposes of supporting their chosen goals and policies. In this situation, policy makers usually exhibit overconfidence in the originally chosen policy as a form of bolstering, the psychological condition that helps policy makers maintain their expectations of an outcome with high gains and minimal losses. When disruptive threats are present, policy makers continue to display overconfidence and other forms of defensive avoidance in continuing to believe that they will not find a better alternative than their present defective policy.<sup>23</sup> When

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<sup>17</sup> Lebow, *Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crisis*, 111.

<sup>18</sup> Suedfeld, P., Tetlock, P.E. "Integrative Complexity of Communications." See also Raphael, "Integrative Complexity Theory;" and Suedfeld, Tetlock, and Carmen Ramirez, "War, Peace, and Integrative Complexity: UN Speeches on the Middle East Problem, 1949-1976," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 1977, 427.

<sup>19</sup> Suedfeld, P., Tetlock, P.E., Integrative Complexity of Communications in International Crises, *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 1977, 170.

<sup>20</sup> Holsti, O.R. "The 1914 Case." *American Political Science Review*, 1965, 59: 365-378.

<sup>21</sup> Janis, I.L., Mann, L. *Decision Making: A Psychological Analysis of Conflict, Choice, and Commitment*, (New York: The Free Press, 1977), 58.

<sup>22</sup> Janis, I.L. *Victims of Groupthink*. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1972.

<sup>23</sup> Lebow, *Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crisis*, 114.

this becomes the dominant pattern of behavior, the policy maker tries to keep from being exposed to communications that might reveal the shortcomings of the course of action that has been chosen. When confronted with negative information, they will then alter its implications through a process of wishful thinking.<sup>24</sup> This often takes the form of rationalization that argues against the prospect of serious loss if the current policy remains unchanged. Selective attention, denial, or almost any other psychological method used by policy makers to cope with critical information can be institutionalized.<sup>25</sup> Merely by making their expectations or preferences known, policy makers encourage their subordinates to report or emphasize information supportive of those expectations and preferences. Policy makers can also purposely structure their information communications networks and intelligence organizations to achieve the same effect.<sup>26</sup> Leaders who have convinced themselves they can succeed using these psychological methods may suffer dissociative reactions when overwhelmed by information indicating they are on a path heading to disaster. This can result in paralysis and erratic steering when defenses used to counter stress, anxiety, and a decline in complexity, break down.<sup>27</sup>

From a cognitive perspective, analysis reveals that as crisis approaches its peak, decision makers increasingly perceive that they are under time pressure.<sup>28</sup> In the context of Janis and Mann's model, as time is compressed in which to make a decision, if a policy maker does not have the time necessary to implement an alternative that they believe holds the prospects of avoiding serious loss, the response will be one of impulsive or hypervigilant decision making. This pathology is also likely to be adopted if the time pressures are such that the policy maker does not believe it is even possible to initiate a search for an acceptable alternative. Hypervigilance is characterized by indiscriminate openness to all information and a corresponding failure to determine whether or not that information is relevant, reliable, or supportive.<sup>29</sup> Decisions made by leaders in a hypervigilant state are likely to be overly influenced by the will and opinions of others. In its most extreme form of panic, decisions are formulated in terms of the most simple-minded rules: such as "Do what others around you are doing."<sup>30</sup>

Thus, in terms of behavior and information processing in high stress conditions, the above evidence can be used to demonstrate a relationship between Janis and Mann's dysfunctional behavior pathologies in stressful situations and the decline of complexity. Establishing this relationship serves to highlight that an accurate determination of decision maker complexity will effectively serve as a suitable independent measure of stress in Janis and Mann's decision making model, which can then be revised. A reformulation of Janis and Mann's conflict model will then effectively assess decision making conditions, after which focus can be appropriately placed on decision making behavior and its impact on decisions using the Janis and Mann construct. Revision

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 114.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 112.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 114.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 115.

<sup>28</sup> Holsti, "The 1914 Case." *American Political Science Review*, 365-378.

<sup>29</sup> Lebow, *Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crisis*, 114.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 110.

of the model will thus enable researchers to evaluate the model in future research concerning decision stress and its relation to the behavior that Janis and Mann associate with motivated bias. Through this approach, the development of a unique independent measurement of stress for Janis and Mann's model will refine the study of decision making during situations of foreign policy crisis.

## THESIS STRUCTURE

Broadly, my argument is outlined in five steps. First, after examining Janis and Mann's crisis model of decision making and understanding the problem of circularity, it is evident that an independent measure of stress is needed to circumvent the issue. Second, decision maker stress independent of decision and behavior results can be specifically deduced by analyzing cognitive complexity in crisis situations. Third, through the study of several cases of foreign policy crisis, I will be able to examine cognitive complexity and measure change in decision makers over the course of crisis to determine whether or not stress is related to the behavior that Janis and Mann associate with motivated bias. Fourth, after evaluation of this independent measure of stress, I will be able to reformulate Janis and Mann's decision making model to expunge the circularity identified and come away with a more effective model that will be a positive contribution to the study of conflict decision making when using Janis and Mann's construct. Fifth and finally, I will be able to provide a review of project research and identify opportunities for further development that will be valuable to future study in the field of crisis decision making.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Janis and Mann's construct is indeed a thought provoking and descriptive model of the decision making process, advancing the idea that a policy maker's need to make a decision involves conflict that brings a certain degree of stress with its excess or absence being a key determinant of problematic behavior that impacts decisions. As my thesis focuses on how stress is measured independently of its effects, I will focus this literature review on Janis and Mann, works pertaining to the relevant source of decision maker stress, how other authors have characterized Janis and Mann's claims about the source of stress and the different behavior responses it produces in various conditions.

In a review of literature specific to sources of decision maker stress, the field of crisis decision making has identified decisional conflict to be an important source of stress. Psychology has been concerned with such conflict for a long time. Early in the formal study of decision making, Kurt Lewin was among the first to identify choice and conflict to be closely related (Lewin, 1931).<sup>31</sup> Lewin specified that choice produces conflict that can only be resolved by making a choice between possible alternatives.<sup>32</sup> After Lewin's initial

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<sup>31</sup> Lewin, K. The Conflict between Aristotelian and Galilean Modes of Thought in Contemporary Psychology, *Journal of General Psychology*, 1931. 5, 141.

<sup>32</sup> Lewin, The Conflict between Aristotelian and Galilean Modes of Thought in Contemporary Psychology, *Journal of General Psychology*, 141.

work, decisional conflict was incorporated in psychological approaches to decision making and has since been associated to be a source of decision making stress (Lewin, 1951).<sup>33</sup>

In comparable situations involving foreign policy crisis, Irving Janis and Leon Mann found that intense conflicts are likely to arise whenever a policy maker has to make an important decision that will entail significant risk (Janis and Mann, 1977).<sup>34</sup> Such decision conflict becomes increasingly pronounced as the decision maker becomes aware of the risk of suffering serious losses from whatever course of action they choose to take.<sup>35</sup> As problematic situations in foreign policy rarely contain viable options that are devoid of substantial tradeoffs or the possibility of great loss, decisional conflicts serve as a significant source of stress.

Summary studies of stress during World War II by Janis and Mann, culminated in the conflict model of decision making (Janis and Mann, 1977).<sup>36</sup> For a brief overview of Janis and Mann's model, decisions are easy when doing nothing involves little risk (not changing from the status quo), or when changing involves negligible risk (facing serious risks in not changing from the status quo). These pathologies are called "unconflicted adherence" and "unconflicted change". When either option (not changing or changing) has risks and when the decision maker has hope to find a better solution and sufficient time to do so, he or she will engage in "vigilant" decision making, or seek additional information and weigh the options. Vigilant decision making is said to occur in situations of moderate stress. However, if it is not realistic to hope to find a better solution because all options are expected to be worse than the status-quo even though one might still be better than the others, the most common decision making pathology was previously discussed, is "defensive avoidance", or not thinking about the decision at all. Finally, if there is time pressure, a condition of frantic and disorganized search called "hypervigilance" may result, in which the decision maker considers one option after another, with little search for evidence that often substantiates a good solution. When the decision maker does seek evidence, the search is unsystematic, and the most useful evidence is often overlooked. Defensive avoidance and hypervigilance are both examples of high-stress decision making. A unique feature of the conflict-theory model, for which much support exists, is the claim that decision making is highly influenced by the factor of decision conditions. The same person may make rational, methodical decisions in one situation, and very poor decisions in others.

Janis and Mann's construct of conflict decision making is a motivational model that differs significantly from cognitive models. Fundamentally, given that problematic behavior is sometimes driven by misperceptions, two categories of bias that might affect perceptions are unmotivated and motivated biases. Unmotivated biases generally derive from the normal cognitive mechanisms by which the brain works to process information. This type of cognitive bias is pervasive and largely unavoidable. Motivated biases, on the other hand, are driven by human psychological needs that have to do with maintaining generally positive beliefs

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<sup>33</sup> Lewin, K. *Field theory in social science*. Selected theoretical papers, edited by Cartwright, D., New York: Harper & Brothers, 1931.

<sup>34</sup> Janis and Mann. *Decision Making: A Psychological Analysis of Conflict, Choice, and Commitment*, 45.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 45.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 45.

and images of the world. While this tendency is common in decision makers facing decisional conflict, it is individual based and can potentially be avoided depending on variable characteristics of leaders.

The cognitive model forwarded by Jervis and others, emphasizes the ways in which human cognitive limitations distort decision making by over simplification in problem representation and information processing.<sup>37</sup> Jervis also contends that it is impossible to make crucial foreign policy decisions without reference to a policymaker's need for cognitive consistency. In this cognitive construct, decision makers develop beliefs about the world forming unique "images", around which relationship and motives of other actors are structured.

The motivational model offered by Janis and Mann, argues that the primary source of perceptual distortion is based on human psychological motivation.<sup>38</sup> Their basic assumption is that humans are emotional beings rather than rational calculators, with strong psychological needs to construct and maintain positive images of themselves and their environment. In the midst of a crisis, if no alternatives appear to be available that promise success, the psychological pressure becomes too great for leaders.<sup>39</sup> Unable to face the discouraging truth about their options, they retreat to the psychological state of defensive avoidance discussed previously, in which they refuse to submit their plans to the test of reality. This behavior is the response to deal with stress, and leads to some kind of perceptual distortion.<sup>40</sup>

The two models just described represent the most comprehensive attempts to apply psychological insights to the study of political behavior. Unfortunately for those concerned with the development of a psychological paradigm, the principal arguments of these two works are derived from sufficiently different premises that prevent their reformulation into an integrated model of decision making.<sup>41</sup> Lebow succinctly summarizes the difference between the cognitive model of Jervis and the motivational model of Janis and Mann:

"For Jervis, the starting point is the human need to develop simple rules for processing information in order to make sense of an extraordinarily complex and uncertain environment. Janis and Mann take as their fundamental assumption the human desire to avoid fear, shame, and guilt. Jervis describes cognitive consistency as the most important organizing principle of cognition. Janis and Mann contend that aversion of psychological stress is the most important drive affecting cognition. Jervis concludes that expectations condition our interpretation of events and our receptivity to information, while Janis and Mann argue for the importance of preferences. For Jervis, we see what we expect to see, for Janis and Mann, what we want to see."<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Jervis, R. *Perceptions and Misperceptions in International Politics*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 117-124.

<sup>38</sup> Janis and Mann. *Decision Making: A Psychological Analysis of Conflict, Choice, and Commitment*, 45.

<sup>39</sup> Lebow, *Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crisis*, 111.

<sup>40</sup> Janis and Mann. *Decision Making: A Psychological Analysis of Conflict, Choice, and Commitment*, 45.

<sup>41</sup> Lebow, *Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crisis*, 111.

<sup>42</sup> Lebow, *Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crisis*, 111.

Elaborating further on the motivational model of Janis and Mann, their construct examines the ramifications for decision making of affective reactions associated with psychological stress. Their analysis acknowledges the importance of cognitive limitations. Janis and Mann's theory is constructed around the limitations on decision making that follow from the stress occasioned by consequential decisions. They present the decision maker as "beset by conflict, doubts, and worry, struggling with incongruous longings, antipathies, and loyalties, and seeking relief by procrastinating, rationalizing, or denying responsibilities for his own choice".<sup>43</sup>

Janis and Mann's construct is clearly relevant in the study of crisis decision making, as the implications are crucial for crisis management decisions by policy makers who are emotional beings with needs and desires. Even though not all foreign policy decisions carry high significance, these choices do matter and must be understood when involving momentous consequences. When conditions contain an element of risk, decisions involve the possibility that the policy maker may not achieve desired objectives, be faced with painful costs, and incur losses with regard to time, money, effort, prestige, or self-respect; all of which have psychological impacts.<sup>44</sup> For Janis and Mann, these issues come at the cost of psychological stress upon the decision maker in the form of defensive avoidance, and deficient information processing. The odds outweigh accurate choices, even for the most conscientious of decision makers, when important consequences are at stake. The possible mal-adaptive effects of stress are numerous and as demonstrated, decreasing cognitive complexity can be a sign of high stress and related to Janis and Mann's dysfunctional decision making pathologies.

Although stress is typically detrimental to decision making, it is important to point out that it is not uniform in this regard. The contingent nature of these effects is the second important conclusion of Janis and Mann's conflict model. Although specified conditions of stress often lead to Janis and Mann's various dysfunctional pathologies of defensive avoidance, denial, or panic, it occasionally results in the management of stress resulting in adequate information processing. According to their analysis, this effective pathology is most likely to occur when the conflicted decision maker believes both in the possibility of a satisfactory policy, and that he has sufficient time and resources for its implementation.

#### THE PROBLEM WITH JANIS AND MANN

Detailed examination of Janis and Mann's model reveals that the problem of circularity within their construct rests on the fact a series of assumptions are formed that define the functional relationships between decision conflict and the rise of psychological stress. In doing so, the research scientists operationally define observed behavior and resulting decisions as a measure of conditional stress levels; herein lies the problematic issue of circularity. Highlighting Janis and Mann's formal assumptions will serve to initially identify and examine the flawed interdependent relationship between stress and behavior, and the circular construct of the Janis and Mann model of conflict decision making.

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<sup>43</sup> Janis and Mann, *Decision Making: A Psychological Analysis of Conflict, Choice, and Commitment*, 115.

<sup>44</sup> Kinder, D.R. and Weiss, J.A. In Lieu of Rationality: Psychological Perspectives on Foreign Policy Decision Making, *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 1978, Vol. 22, No. 4, 707-735.

1. *The amount of stress generated by a conflicted decision corresponds directly to the **importance of goals** that are to be attained by the decision maker.*

First, Janis and Mann postulate that stress is not aroused unless a decision maker realizes that he or she stands to risk or lose significant positive goals, most notably in areas of utilitarian values, social approval, or self-approval.<sup>45</sup> In following this definition, when behavior can be attributed toward countering risk to issues of paramount importance to the policymaker, Janis and Mann's model assigns stress as being a primary motivational cause, while this may not always be the case. More importantly, Janis and Mann specifically connect a decision maker's primary objective to emotional involvement, thereby using it as a measure of stress. Their assumption points to the importance of the objectives to be achieved as a linear measure of stress, i.e. the greater the importance of goals to the policymaker, the higher the degree of emotional stress.

2. *When a decision maker encounters threats or opportunities that cause the consideration of a **change in course of action**, the degree of decisional stress is directly related to the level of commitment to the present course.*

Whenever the decision maker is tempted to change course of action, the losses he or she expects to suffer from failing to fulfill a prior commitment constitute a major source of threat that discourages switching to a new course of action. In this assumption, Janis and Mann clearly tie present behavior to the amount of stress involved in implementing a change and in doing so, use behavior as a measure of stress by definition in choosing to stay with the present course or select an alternative course of action. For the purposes of clarity, changing course of action in situations of foreign policy crisis are dependent upon a decision maker's ability to calculate risk to policies and tolerate loss with the course of action chosen.

3. *When decisional conflict is present because each alternative poses serious risks, loss of hope about finding a solution that does not intensify risks is directly related to stress levels that will lead to **defensive avoidance**.*

Defensive avoidance is dysfunctional behavior characterized by lack of vigilant search, selective attention, denial, distortion of the meaning of warning messages, and construction of wishful rationalizations that minimize negative consequences.<sup>46</sup> Janis and Mann directly attribute the manifestation of this dysfunctional behavior as a measure of the emotional stress level. Their assumption again points to the behavior of defensive avoidance as a functional measure of stress, i.e. the greater the defensive avoidance, the higher the degree of emotional stress. The interdependence of stress being the cause of dysfunctional behavior is central to the problem of circularity and predominant in Janis and Mann's model construct.

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<sup>45</sup> Janis and Mann, *Decision Making: A Psychological Analysis of Conflict, Choice, and Commitment*, 50.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 50.

4. *In decisional conflict, when the threat is high and the decision maker anticipates having insufficient time to escape losses, his or her level of stress remains high and increases the likelihood of **hypervigilance**.*

The state of hypervigilance arises when time is short for escaping an approaching threat. A policy maker in this state experiences so much cognitive constriction and perseveration that his or her thought processes are disrupted. Janis and Mann use this aroused and reduced state as a defined measure of heightened stress in which the policymaker fails to recognize and evaluate open alternatives. He or she is likely to search frantically for a solution, persevere in thinking about a limited number of alternatives, and then adhere to a hastily contrived solution that seems to promise immediate relief, often at the cost of post decisional regret.<sup>47</sup> As the pending threat is that of not being able to escape decision losses, Janis and Mann again directly associate behavior to the amount of stress involved as hypervigilance cannot occur without high stress.

5. *A moderate degree of stress in response to a challenging threat induces a **vigilant** effort to scrutinize the alternative courses of action and work out a good solution, provided the decision maker expects to find a satisfactory way to resolve the decisional dilemma. In decisional conflict, significantly high stress levels are inversely proportional to decision maker vigilance, whereas a moderate degree of stress enables a decision maker to remain in the most advantageous position to arrive at an adequate solution.*

In a vigilant state, when conflict is induced by warning of undesirable consequences or an actual setback, the decision maker becomes motivated to seek relevant information, to discuss the problem with others, and to weigh alternatives. Janis and Mann use this assumption as a measure of stress that drives an effort to arrive at the best possible solution, provided that there is optimism about having the resources and sufficient time in which to examine the problem.

Regarding their general assumptions in conflict decision making, Janis and Mann presume that decision making behavior is retroactively both an indicator and measure of conditional stress. Clearly this approach utilizes behavior as a measure of existing conditions between stress levels, behavioral manifestation and decision. In other words, Janis and Mann's assumptions describe behavior and outcomes that are used as a direct measure of their conditions, defining their circular approach.

Specifically, Janis and Mann define intense stress over a particular decision as giving rise to dysfunctional behavior - defensive avoidance or disruptive hypervigilance - that cause poor decisions, while stating that policymakers who experience moderate stress when motivated by a decisional dilemma will process information methodically and result in consistently good decisions. On the opposing end of the spectrum, Janis and Mann assume that a very low level of stress will result in insufficient concern about the possibility

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<sup>47</sup> Janis and Mann, *Decision Making: A Psychological Analysis of Conflict, Choice, and Commitment*, 51.



of overlooking unfavorable consequences that might be subsequently regretted.<sup>48</sup> In these examples, Janis and Mann's model of conflict decision making theorizes stress levels to be directly related to the foreign policy decision in consideration - this is problematic.

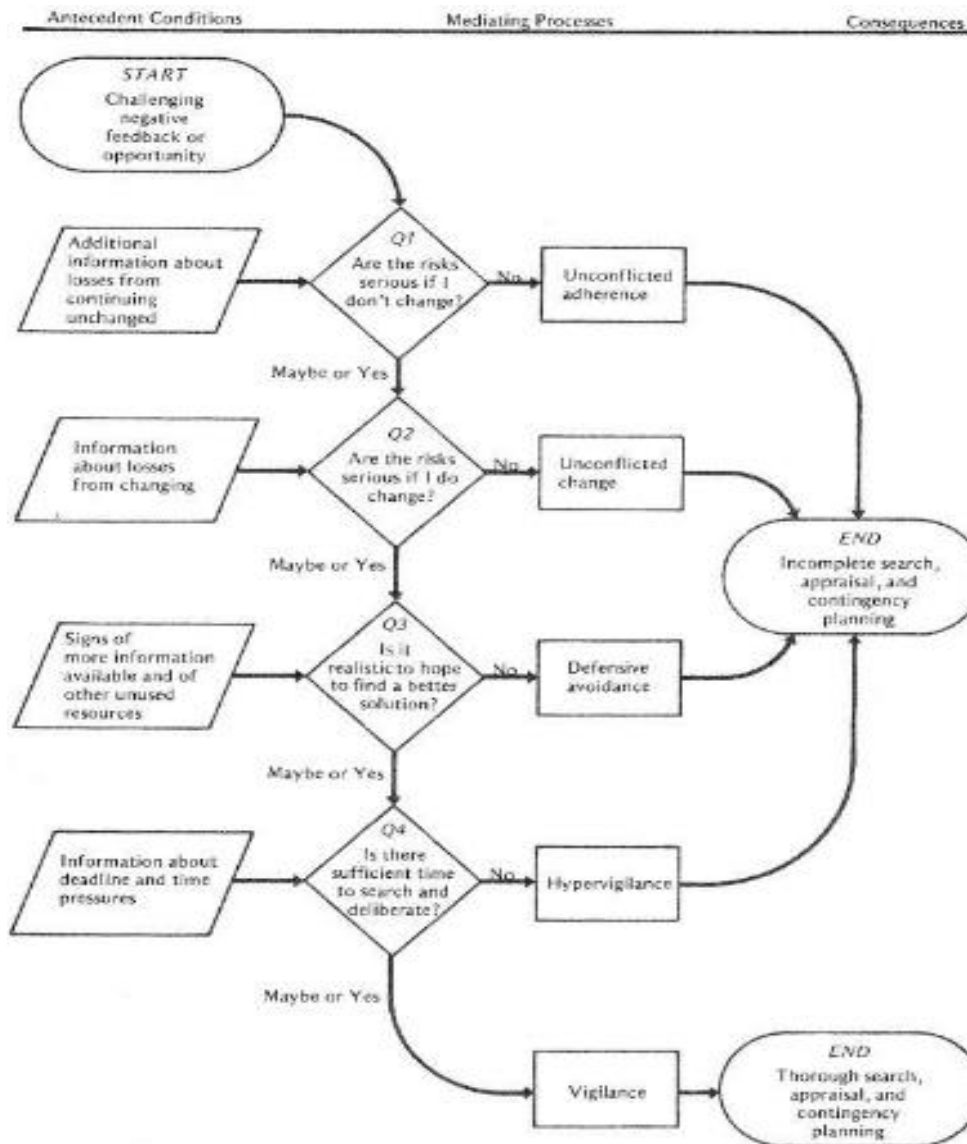
The greater the importance of goals and a decision maker's level of commitment to the current course of action to attain those goals, the higher the emotional stress on the decision maker toward that particular decision or goal. In turn, heightened emotional stress toward a particular decision is more likely to lead to defensive avoidance of new or conflicting information that might change the decision calculus, causing a negative impact to goals deemed important and courses of action to realize those goals. Ultimately, this is likely to result in a greater propensity for situational hypervigilance, the lack of vigilant information processing, and a poor final decision outcome.

Conversely, the opposing end of the spectrum with respect to goals unimportant to the decision maker and the lack of commitment toward courses of action to attain those goals is also true. In this situation, very low emotional stress in a particular decision is likely to lead to total avoidance of new or conflicting information that might change decision calculus. Ultimately, this will result in greater susceptibility for situational hypervigilance as the decision maker is forced into a decision. A lack of vigilant information processing is likely to take place in this environment and therefore, will likely induce a negative final decision outcome. According to Janis and Mann's theory, moderate levels of emotional stress with respect to goals and an even level of commitment toward courses of action to attain those goals, will be the path most likely to lead to vigilant information processing that results in a final decision outcome that accomplishes the original objective. Taking this perspective into consideration, the Janis and Mann construct holds that enough decision stress will eventually result in behavior dysfunction and decision inaccuracy.

In consideration of these initial assumptions, Janis and Mann present their "conflict model" of decision making in terms of the sequence of questions that a policy maker must ask themselves when confronted with new information about the policies to which they are committed. Their answers to these questions determine which of five possible patterns of coping behavior they will adopt (see Figure 1). In general, a decision maker answer of "no" to these questions leads to dysfunctional behavior that results in poor decisions. Conversely, an answer of "yes" to the queries leads to functional behavior that leads to good decisions. The aspects of decision making that Janis and Mann consider good or bad to be related to the appropriate search, appraisal, and contingency planning of available alternatives.

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<sup>48</sup> Janis and Mann, *Decision Making: A Psychological Analysis of Conflict, Choice, and Commitment*, 52.



**Figure 1 – Janis and Mann’s Conflict Model of Decision Making Applicable to Consequential Decisions** <sup>49</sup>

Regarding Janis and Mann’s “conflict model” questions, the first pertains to the risks to the policy maker of not changing his policy or taking some kind of protective action. If the decision maker assesses that risks are low, there is no stress and they can ignore the information. Janis and Mann refer to this state as “unconflicted adherence” which becomes dysfunctional when it is a means of avoiding the stress associated with directly confronting a difficult decision.<sup>50</sup> If the perceived risks are thought to be serious, the policy maker must attempt to identify other courses of action available to them. If the search reveals a feasible alternative, Janis

<sup>49</sup> Janis and Mann, *Decision Making: A Psychological Analysis of Conflict, Choice, and Commitment*, 70.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 55-56.

and Mann expect that it will be adopted without conflict as “unconflicted change”; this path becomes dysfunctional when prior courses of action are changed only slightly as a means of avoiding stress.<sup>51</sup>

If the policy maker perceives that serious risks are inherent in the current policy but is unable to identify an acceptable alternative, they experience a rise in psychological stress. They become emotionally aroused and worried about finding a feasible policy alternative. If they conclude that it is unrealistic to hope for a better policy, the policy maker will terminate their search despite continuing dissatisfaction with the available options and result in “defensive avoidance”, a dysfunctional path characterized by efforts to avoid fear arousing warnings.<sup>52</sup> If the decision maker finds an alternative that holds the prospect of avoiding serious loss, they must inquire if there is sufficient time to implement the course of action. If the answer to this question is no, the response will be one of “hypervigilance”, a pattern of coping that is adopted when time pressures are such that the policy maker does not believe that it is possible to initiate a search for an acceptable alternative.<sup>53</sup>

The behavior patterns reviewed above – unconflicted adherence, unconflicted change, defensive avoidance, and hypervigilance – are all dysfunctional means of coping with psychological stress. In their conflict decision making construct, Janis and Mann directly associate these behavior patterns with a rise in stress levels. But these coping behaviors are not likely to lead to good decisions as each pattern is characterized by some kind of cognitive distortion. High quality decision making occurs when a policy maker is able to answer “yes” to all four of conflict model questions. “Vigilance” is the pattern of coping that leads to good decisions and is associated with the policy maker realizing that their current policy will encounter serious difficulties; while no obvious satisfactory alternative is readily apparent, the leader believes that an acceptable alternative can probably be found and implemented in the time available.<sup>54</sup>

Thus, based on the presence of dysfunctional behavior in this construct, the circular flaw initially present in Janis and Mann’s behavioral assumptions is intrinsically carried forward into their “conflict model” of decision making. Notably, the model itself presents circularity in specifying that each of the five behavioral coping patterns serve as a measure of conditions of stress to some degree. Obviously in any case study selection, Janis and Mann would deduce that conditions of stress were caused by the decision at hand and the same stress would be culpable not only in dysfunctional behavior, but also in the implementation of decisions and any resulting foreign policy choices.

The layout of this model makes it apparent that Janis and Mann believe that moderate stress can facilitate good decision making, but only in ideal circumstances. In less than optimum situations, Janis and Mann specify that polarized high or low stress over decisions facilitate dysfunctional behavior that serves to impair the quality of behavior and decisions after which are used to measure the levels of stress in a circular fashion.

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<sup>51</sup> Janis and Mann, *Decision Making: A Psychological Analysis of Conflict, Choice, and Commitment*, 56-57, 73.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 57-58, 74, 107-133.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 59-60.

<sup>54</sup> Lebow, *Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crisis*, 111.

Therefore, in the retrospective historical study of foreign policy, Janis and Mann's model would state that inaccurate decisions and dysfunctional behavior are caused by stress. As non-ideal situations are prevalent an overwhelming majority of the time in crisis, this brings the discourse back to our argument of Janis and Mann's circularity, beginning and ending with foreign policy decision that is theorized to be the cause of dysfunction. This presents an opportunity in which Janis and Mann's construct can be revised to be more useful in the study of decision making in situations of foreign policy crisis.

Nevertheless, Janis and Mann's emphasis on the effects of emotional stress is a valuable and unique addition to a field far outweighed by cognitive constraints on choice. Works premised on rational models of choice in making decisions fail to consider psychological aspects of motivated bias or attempt to examine its relationship with stress when irrational decisions are made. Although problematic, Janis and Mann's motivational model achieves these ends. Their work is crucial to what is obvious to the observation of decision makers in extremis; that psychological stress is a critical feature of decision making and merits understanding. It interacts in important ways with cognitive processing and for our purposes has consequences for behavior that makes the difference in crisis.

Different approaches in the field of crisis decision making agree that psychological studies are most relevant when situations are not routine, when scenarios are ambiguous, when there is information overload, when events are unanticipated, and when stress is extremely high (Holsti and Axelrod, 1976; Hopple, 1980).<sup>55</sup> Not surprisingly, these conditions frequently characterize crisis situations. As this is the case, authors in the field of decision making have argued explicitly that psychological studies are particularly beneficial in explaining crisis decisions made by individuals and have leveraged Janis and Mann's work to achieve various aspects of these ends (Lazarus and Folkman, 1986; Keinan, 1987; O'Hare, 1992; Folger, Poole, and Stutman, 1997; and Weitzman and Weitzman, 1998).<sup>56</sup>

Similar to Janis and Mann's assumptions in their motivational model, studies from both rational and cognitive perspectives have found that crisis seems particularly likely to evoke stress in leaders because of the myriad responsibilities that they carry. According with Janis and Mann, a number of authors in the field have argued that an international crisis is usually a personal crisis for the policy makers involved (North, 1962; Holsti, 1976; and Wiegale, 1978).<sup>57</sup> There is wide agreement in research over decades that has found that the more severe the crisis, the greater the stress as it is positively associated with severity of threat, shortness of time,

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<sup>55</sup> Holsti, O.R., "Foreign Policy Formation Viewed Cognitively," in *Structure of Decision*, edited by Robert Axelrod (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), 29-30. See also Gerald W. Hopple, *Political Psychology and Biopolitics* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1980), 6.

<sup>56</sup> Fred Greenstein cited by Betty Glad, "Contributions of Psychobiography," in *Hand-book of Political Psychology*, edited by Jeanne N. Knutson (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1974), 300; Lazarus and Folkman use Janis and Mann in stress theory, 1986; Keinan uses Janis and Mann in decision making under threat-engendered stress, 1987; O'Hare's uses Janis and Mann in complex stressful situations, 1992; Folger, Poole, and Stutman use Janis and Mann in information distortion and stereotyping, 1997; and Weitzman and Wietzman use Janis and Mann for making balanced decisions to counter egocentric biases engendered by conflict situations, 1998.

<sup>57</sup> North, R.C., "Decision Making in Crisis: An Introduction," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* (September 1962): 197; Holsti, *Crisis, Escalation, War*, 10; and Thomas C. Wiegale, "The Psychophysiology of Elite Stress in Five International Crises: A Preliminary Test of a Voice Measurement Technique," *International Studies Quarterly* (December 1978): 469-70.

and degree of surprise, all of which increase the decision maker's need for a response and decision (Lazarus, 1966; Schroeder, Driver, and Streufert, 1967; Holsti, 1976; Lebow, 1981; Janis, 1982; and Raphael, 1982).<sup>58</sup>

The psychological effects of very high stress levels on decision making are well established across the study of crisis decision making. There is wide agreement that an individual leader's span of attention is reduced and perception is distorted. Cognitive processes become rigid and there is less tolerance for uncertainty, insensitivity to alternative points of view, and increasing reliance on established processes. A large number of authors side with Janis and Mann that dysfunctional reactions may exacerbate the problem and lead to even higher levels of stress and declining performance in a self-reinforcing cycle.<sup>59</sup> A review of cognitive literature along with Janis and Mann's work concludes that there is a paradox concerning decision making in crisis: as the intensity of a crisis increases, effective decision making becomes less likely (Schroeder, Driver, and Streufert, 1967; Holsti, 1977; Lebow, 1981; Janis, 1982; and Raphael, 1982).<sup>60</sup>

Over the past several decades there have been developments in the cognitive approach to decision making in complex, uncertain conditions. Research has examined problems of strategic significance as a basis for understanding how decision makers reach what are believed to be optimized solutions. Analytical methods have been used to model the significance of the strategic environment, competitive positions, and how decision makers reach decisions among risky options (Abdell and Hamond, 1979; Goodwin and Wright, 1988; Rowe, 1996).<sup>61</sup> These studies have contributed to decades of previous research and over time, the field of crisis decision making has steadily been saturated with the cognitive psychological approach in the study of choice.

Prior to the last 10-15 years, motivational explanations for choice have been overshadowed by the cognitive psychological approach. Recently however, the validity of applying the cognitive approach to decision making has been found to become problematic when considering that decision makers are not operating in isolation from unique individual emotional behavior. Numerous research studies have found that decision makers encounter complexities, uncertainty, ambiguity of personal preferences, and dynamic changing

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<sup>58</sup> Lebow, R.N., *Between Peace and War*, 236-37; Holsti, *Crisis, Escalation, War*, 10; Holsti, *Foreign Policy Formation Viewed Cognitively*, 106-107; Lazarus, R.S., *Psychological Stress and the Coping Process* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966), 6; Schroder, Driver, and Streufert, *Human Information Processing*, 1967, 90-93; Janis, I.L., "Adaptive Personality Changes Resulting from Stressful Episodes," in Janis, *Stress, Attitudes, and Decisions*, 132; and Raphael, T.D., "Integrative Complexity Theory and Forecasting International Crises," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* (September 1982), 425.

<sup>59</sup> Holsti, *Crisis Escalation War*, Chapter 1; Holsti, *Foreign Policy Formation Viewed Cognitively*, 106; Smart, C. and Vertinsky, I., "Designs for Crisis Decision Units," *Administrative Science Quarterly* (December 1977), 642-44; Suedfeld and Tetlock, "Integrative Complexity of Communications in International Crisis," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* (March 1977), 170-71; and Raphael, *Integrative Complexity Theory*, 426.

<sup>60</sup> Schroder, Driver, and Streufert, *Human Information Processing*, 1967, 90-93; Holsti, *Crisis, Escalation, War*, 17; Lebow, *Between Peace and War*, 236-37; Janis, "Adaptive Personality Changes Resulting from Stressful Episodes," in Janis, *Stress, Attitudes, and Decisions*, 132; and Raphael, "Integrative Complexity Theory and Forecasting International Crises," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* (September 1982): 425.

<sup>61</sup> Abell, K.D., Hamond, J.S., 1979. *Strategic Market Planning: Problems and Analytical Approaches*. Prentice Hall International: Englewood Cliffs; Goodwin P and Wright G., 1988. *Decision Analysis for Management & Judgement*. John Wiley: Chichester, UK; Rowe, A.J. et al, 1996. *Strategic Management: A Methodological Approach*. Addison Wesley: Reading, MA.

conditions that affect their choices (Lindblom, 1950; Hurst, 1986; Hurst, Rush, and White, 1989; Minzberg, 1994).<sup>62</sup>

Due to continued research findings related to personality differences and individual bias, academics have renewed focus on the study of motivational psychology. Over the last decade, the motivational approach to analyzing conflicted decisions has benefitted from increased exposure. The work of Janis and Mann has been widely used in the field of decision making and leveraged to further the discussion of the role that emotions play when leaders make conflicted decisions. Over recent years, emotional responses have been found to play a major role during the decision process (Finucane, Peters, and Slovic, 2003; Ketelaar, 2004; Ketelaar, 2006).<sup>63</sup> Studies have also delineated how emotions operate in a subjective manner (Pieters and Van Raaij, 1988; Isen, 2000; Loewenstein and Lerner, 2003; Finucane, Peters, and Slovic, 2003; Ketelaar, 2004; Ketelaar, 2006).<sup>64</sup> Reinforcing the findings of Janis and Mann, recent research has also found that motivational processes prioritize certain goals and thereby mobilize and give direction to behavior (Bagozzi, Baumgartner, Pieters, and Zeelenberg, 2000; Frijda, 2006; Nelissen, Dijk, and De Vries, 2007; Zeelenberg, Nelissen, and Pieters, 2007).<sup>65</sup> This recent work on the motivational constraints of decision choice has assisted the motivational psychological approach in explaining why decisions go wrong from a perspective considerate of motivated bias.

Bridging the gap between the cognitive and motivational psychological approaches to decision making, the study of policymaker cognitive complexity in numerous international crises has determined that policy maker decline of complexity results in dysfunctional behavior responses, similar to those of that Janis and Mann

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<sup>62</sup> Lindblom, C., 1950. The science of muddling through, *Public Admin Rev*, 19: 79-88; Hurst, D.K., 1986. Why strategic management is bankrupt, *Organiz Dyn*, Autumn: 4-27; Hurst, D.K, Rush, J.C., White, R.E., 1989. Top management teams and organizational renewal. *Strategic Management*, Journal 10: 87-105.

<sup>63</sup> Pieters, R., & van Raaij, W. F., 1988, The role of affect in economic behavior. In W. F. van Raaij, G. M. van Veldhoven, & K.-E. Warneryd (Eds.), *Handbook of economic psychology*, 108-142, Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer.; Isen, A., 2000, Some perspectives on positive affect and self-regulation, *Psychological Inquiry*, 11, 184-187.; Loewenstein, G. F., & Lerner, J., 2003, The role of affect in decision making. in R. J. Davidson, K. R. Scherer, & H. H. Goldsmith (Eds.), *Handbook of affective sciences*, 619-642, Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.; Finucane, M. L., Peters, E., & Slovic, P., 2003, Judgment and decision making: The dance of affect and reason, in S. L. Schneider & J. Shanteau (Eds.), *Emerging perspectives on judgment and decision research*, 327-364, New York: Cambridge University Press.; Ketelaar, T., 2004, Ancestral emotions, current decisions: Using evolutionary game theory to explore the role of emotions in decision making., in C. Crawford & C. Salmon (Eds.), *Evolutionary psychology, public policy and personal decisions*, 145-168, Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.; Ketelaar, T., 2006, The role of moral sentiments in economic decision making, in D. De Cremer, M. Zeelenberg, & K. Murnighan (Eds.), *Social psychology and economics*, 197-116, Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

<sup>64</sup> Pieters, R., & van Raaij, W. F., 1988, The role of affect in economic behavior. In W. F. van Raaij, G. M. van Veldhoven, & K.-E. Warneryd (Eds.), *Handbook of economic psychology*, 108-142, Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer.; Isen, A., 2000, Some perspectives on positive affect and self-regulation, *Psychological Inquiry*, 11, 184-187.; Loewenstein, G. F., & Lerner, J., 2003, The role of affect in decision making. in R. J. Davidson, K. R. Scherer, & H. H. Goldsmith (Eds.), *Handbook of affective sciences*, 619-642, Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.; Finucane, M. L., Peters, E., & Slovic, P., 2003, Judgment and decision making: The dance of affect and reason, in S. L. Schneider & J. Shanteau (Eds.), *Emerging perspectives on judgment and decision research*, 327-364, New York: Cambridge University Press.; Ketelaar, T., 2004, Ancestral emotions, current decisions: Using evolutionary game theory to explore the role of emotions in decision making., in C. Crawford & C. Salmon (Eds.), *Evolutionary psychology, public policy and personal decisions*, 145-168, Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.; Ketelaar, T., 2006, The role of moral sentiments in economic decision making, in D. De Cremer, M. Zeelenberg, & K. Murnighan (Eds.), *Social psychology and economics*, 197-116, Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

<sup>65</sup> Bagozzi, R. P., Baumgartner, H., Pieters, R., & Zeelenberg, M. (2000). The role of emotions in goal-directed behavior. In S. Ratneshwar, D. G. Mick, & C. Huffman (Eds.), *The why of consumption: Contemporary perspectives on consumer motives, goals, and desires* (pp. 36-58). New York: Routledge.; Frijda, N. H. (2006). *The laws of emotion*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.; Nelissen, R. M. A., Dijk, A. J., & De Vries, N. K. (2007-a). Emotions and goals: Assessing relations between values and emotions. *Cognition and Emotion*, 21, 902-911.; Zeelenberg, M., Nelissen, R., Pieters, R., 2007, Emotion, Motivation, and Decision Making, *A Feeling-Is-for-Doing Approach*, Tilburg University.

identify, which have been associated with the eventual outcome of crisis. Suedfeld and Tetlock have completed a significant amount of research on individual cognitive complexity over their distinguished careers. Several of their studies have reported that a decrease in leaders' integrative complexity is associated with mal-adaptive behavior that precedes the onset of violent conflict. As evidence, Suedfeld and Tetlock found that leader complexity declined between the preliminary and climactic phases of crises culminating in war, specifically World War I and the Korean conflict (Suedfeld and Tetlock, 1977).<sup>66</sup> These scholars again replicated these findings in the context of recurring wars in the Middle East (Suedfeld, Tetlock, and Ramirez, 1977).<sup>67</sup>

In crises occurring at approximately the same times as World War I and the Korean conflict involving some of the same nations and individual leaders but resolved without conflict, leaders' complexity levels were found to have remained stable or increased from the early to the late phases of crisis (Suedfeld and Tetlock, 1977).<sup>68</sup> In crises peacefully resolved, Suedfeld and Tetlock found that policy makers were generally better able to differentiate among various aspects of the situations than in crises ending in war. Leaders were also able to better discriminate along situational dimensions while analyzing and integrating them over the course of the crisis, a result that is consistent with other research (Schroder, Driver, and Streufert, 1967).<sup>69</sup> Specifically, cognitive complexity has been linked with the functionality of behavior responses (Schroder, Driver, and Streufert, 1967).<sup>70</sup>

Although rationalists acknowledge the psychological approach that uses Janis and Mann's motivated models to explain foreign policy decision making, these academics contend that the rational actor model provides a more satisfactory explanation for policy makers and their decision making in crisis. Numerous scholars have argued that the rational actor model provides grounds for a more optimistic judgement of decision making success in conditions of high stress (Cyert and March, 1963; Hermann, 1969; Sigal, 1970; Allison, 1971; Bueno de Mesquita, 1981; and Simon, 1985).<sup>71</sup> Rationalists believe that decision makers behave in an inherently rational manner and are perfectly able to reason their way through extremely complicated situations of crisis without the involvement of emotions. Although acknowledging the merit of psychological considerations in decision making and giving credit to the individual model of stress, committed rationalists fundamentally

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<sup>66</sup> Suedfeld, P., Tetlock, P.E., Integrative Complexity of Communications in International Crises, *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 1977, 169-184.

<sup>67</sup> Suedfeld, P., P. E. Tetlock, and C. Ramirez. 1977. War, peace and integrative complexity. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 427-442.

<sup>68</sup> Suedfeld and Tetlock, "Integrative complexity of communication in international crises", *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 169-184.

<sup>69</sup> Suedfeld, P., P. E. Tetlock. Integrative Complexity of Communications. See also Raphael, *Integrative Complexity Theory*; and Suedfeld, Tetlock, and Ramirez, C., "War, Peace, and Integrative Complexity: UN Speeches on the Middle East Problem, 1949-1976," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* (September 1977), 427; also see research by Schroder, H.M., Driver, M.J., and Streufert, S. *Human Information Processing*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1967.

<sup>70</sup> Suedfeld and Tetlock, *Integrative Complexity of Communications*. See also Raphael, *Integrative Complexity Theory*; and Suedfeld, Tetlock, and Carmen Ramirez, "War, Peace, and Integrative Complexity: UN Speeches on the Middle East Problem, 1949-1976," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* (September 1977), 427; also see research by Schroder, H.M., Driver, M.J., and Streufert, S. *Human Information Processing*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1967.

<sup>71</sup> Simon, H.A. "Human Nature in Politics: The Dialogue of Psychology with Political Science, *American Political Science Review* (June, 1985), 294; Bueno de Mesquita, B. *The War Trap* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981); Hermann, C.F., *Crises in Foreign Policy* (New York: Free Press, 1969), 21-36; Cyert, R.M. and March, J.G., *A Behavioral Theory of the Firm* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1963); Allison, *Essence of Decision*, The rational actor model accounts for behavior in numerous international crises; Sigal, L.V., "The Rational Policy Model and the Formosa Straits Crises," *International Studies Quarterly* (June 1970), 149-53.

disagree with Janis and Mann's theory and maintain that the rational actor model should be considered the dominant paradigm in the study of crisis decision making (Tucker, 1977; Hoagland and Walker, 1979).<sup>72,73</sup>

Interestingly, this group of academics point to the rational actor model of decision making as being a more accurate description of foreign policy crises decisions. Over time, rationalist proponents have utilized numerous foreign policy crises resolved peacefully as evidence of rational decision making by policy makers in high stress situations (Shlaim, 1983).<sup>74</sup> Oneal illustrates this point stating, "the rational actor model proved an appropriate framework for analyzing U.S. actions during early Cold War crises... the widely held assumption that high stress is necessarily dysfunctional finds little support."<sup>75</sup> At the same time, rationalists find themselves explaining crises ending in violence as determined by the likelihood of war inherent in the situation.<sup>76</sup> Even when given the option of using psychological constructs as possible explanations of leadership behavior during the study of these crises, rationalists continue to believe that the weight of evidence indicates that decision makers as a rule adopt rational decision making procedures.<sup>77</sup>

Along these lines, rationalists are critical of work supporting the psychological approach, specifically on that of cognitive complexity and stress by Suedfeld and Tetlock, in which the pair found that the likelihood of war is associated with higher stress levels and lower policymaker complexity. Suedfeld and Tetlock have analyzed diplomatic communications drawn from many of the same U.S. actions during early Cold War crises that have been examined by rationalists and they found that in high stress crises resolved peacefully, policy makers demonstrated higher cognitive complexity than in similar crises that ended in war.<sup>78</sup> Rationalists contend that the outcome of any crisis could be determined by the likelihood of peace or war inherent in the situation, or caused by the decision maker themselves. Therefore, rationalists label the research of Tetlock and Suedfeld as inconclusive.<sup>79</sup>

While one or both of these possibilities may be true in any situation of foreign policy crisis, this presents another opportunity to use Janis and Mann's motivational model, reformulated with an independent measure of stress, to resolve the difference. Understanding the decision making conditions of crisis, decision maker behavior can be effectively analyzed in contribution to outcomes of both peace and war. If analysis judges policy maker behavior to be functional in high stress crisis situations, researchers can be confident that the

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<sup>72</sup> Psychobiographies and studies of leaders' operational codes should also be useful, but the former is a very demanding form of research. Robert C. Tucker, "The Georges' Wilson Reexamined: An Essay on Psychobiography," *American Political Science Review* (June 1977): 607. Regarding the latter, see Steven W. Hoagland and Stephen G. Walker, "Operational Codes and Crisis Outcomes," in *Psychological Models in International Politics*, ed. Lawrence Falkowski (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1979), 125-67.

<sup>73</sup> Oneal, J.R.. *The Rationality of Decision Making during International Crises*, *Polity*. The University of Chicago Press, 1988. Vol. 20, No. 4, 598-622.

<sup>74</sup> Shlaim, A. *The United States and the Berlin Blockade, 1948-1949: A Study in Crisis Decision Making*. University of California Press, 1983. 409-410.

<sup>75</sup> Oneal, *The Rationality of Decision Making during International Crises*, 619.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 619.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 620.

<sup>78</sup> Suedfeld and Tetlock, "Integrative complexity of communication in international crises", *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 169-184.

<sup>79</sup> Oneal, *The Rationality of Decision Making during International Crises*, 620.



cause of any outcome can be found in other aspects of the situation, aside from leadership decision maker behavior. Resolving the rationalist assertion through the use of a revision to Janis and Mann's model, would help to resolve an identified problem with Tetlock and Suedfeld's research on cognitive complexity while also serving to bring the rational and psychological approaches of crisis decision making closer together.

Nonetheless, Janis and Mann's motivational model has been both refuted by rationalists while also being acclaimed and widely used in the psychological approach to crisis decision making. Even so, over the forty years since the publishing of their book *Decision Making: A Psychological Analysis of Conflict, Choice, and Commitment*, no categorized improvements have been made to the Janis and Mann decision making construct that could potentially help in similar situations to those described above. More importantly, among works in the field of crisis decision making, no previous authors have attempted to grapple with the problem of circularity found within the Janis and Mann model or attempt its revision. Therefore, Janis and Mann's existent theoretical construct of circularity between stress, behavior, and decision needs attention.

#### HOW JANIS AND MANN'S PROBLEM CAN BE ADDRESSED

With an awareness of the circularity present in Janis and Mann's theoretical assumptions and in the construction of their decision making model, the problem can be circumvented through the development of an independent measure of stress. A measure of stress conditions independent of the policy maker behavior it is intended to explain would be useful to accurately understand and analyze leadership behavior and decision making during crisis when using the Janis and Mann construct. Separated from leadership behavior and decision making, an independent measure of stress serves to remove circularity in the Janis and Mann model by adding an empirical measure of decision conditions. This advancement will increase the utility of the Janis and Mann model as a practical construct and in doing so will enable a better understanding of decision making in foreign policy situations of crisis.

Leadership behavior is clearly a core underlying problem when decisions go wrong. An independent measure of stress will enable a more precise determination of behavioral functions that separate good decisions from others. Key to the development of an effective independent measure of stress, is the understanding that psychological stress and behavior dysfunction are interdependent in Janis and Mann's conflict model. As described previously, the model specifies that decisions are the cause of stress, leading to dysfunctional behavior and decision outcome that Janis and Mann then utilize as a measure of stress induced by the original decision. In consideration of this circularity, an independent measurement of decision conditions is crucial for developing an understanding of stress levels apart from subsequent behavior dysfunction and eventual decision.

Once this is accomplished, both psychologists and political scientists will be able to utilize a revision of the Janis and Mann model to focus on the study of behavior and its functional relationship to decision outcome. With an independent measure of stress, we will also be able to accurately demonstrate that good decisions

are devoid of the dysfunctional behavioral pathologies that Janis and Mann specify in their model. Advancing this measure will be instrumental in making the Janis and Mann construct more exacting and empirically useful.

From a broad motivational psychological perspective, formulating an independent measure of stress presents a unique opportunity to conduct comprehensive comparative analysis of foreign policy behaviors and the resultant decisional outcomes. This perspective will be helpful in identifying the true nature of the relationship between policymaker stress levels and the functionality of behavior and decisions in which these leaders are engaged. From this perspective, an understanding of decision conditions will enable a detailed case study comparison of individual policymakers' behavior across changing circumstances, while also being helpful in comparing diverse decision makers in similar circumstances of crisis. This academic rigor will allow a deeper understanding of the role of functional behavior in decisions and the implementation of foreign policy in crisis, both those that have been successful and those that have failed. In this manner, the separation of stress and focus on policymaker behavior will enable better understanding of decision making in crisis that will be helpful to the field.

Development of an independent measure of decision making conditions will also offer the opportunity to examine psychological stress itself. An independent measure of stress will present unique insights into policymaker stress levels specifically during crisis. Even though the nature of crisis poses a challenge for decision makers from its initiation, it seems appropriate to assume that ongoing crisis presents a cumulative challenge. An independent measure of stress will be helpful in the conduct of comparative analysis of stress in early and advanced stages of crisis development. This measure will specifically allow political scientists to measure policymaker stress levels across crisis situations for the purposes of determining change. In this regard, an independent measure of stress will enable a more precise understanding of behavior and decision making in diverse situations that will serve to inform and influence future behavioral studies.

Additionally important to note, as it currently stands, the Janis and Mann model is purely a theoretical construct. While it can be applied to crisis situations in theory, the Janis and Mann model lacks heuristic involvement. The development of an independent measure of stress would add material data that will be empirically useful, allowing for an indirect measure of stress. This initiative will also enable the isolation of decision conditions in an effort to develop a functional understanding of policymaker behavior and decision results. In summary, Janis and Mann's problem between stress, behavior, and decision needs to be addressed. This project will remove circularity through an objective revision of the Janis and Mann decision making model with an independent measure of stress.

## CHAPTER 2 – THEORY AND METHOD

### DEVISING AN INDEPENDENT MEASURE OF STRESS THROUGH ANALYSIS OF COGNITIVE COMPLEXITY

The issue of independently measuring stress levels is complicated in most all circumstances of foreign policy crisis by the absence of any direct psychological or physiological measure of those making the decisions. Considering the need to develop an independent measure of stress apart from the behavioral pathologies that Janis and Mann identify, a solution can be the examination of the stressful nature of crisis decision making by analyzing policymaker cognitive complexity in their processing of information during situations of foreign policy crisis.

Because the interest is specifically in cognition, in an effort to devise an independent measure of stress in which foreign policy choices take place, focus can be placed on the influence of stress on cognitive complexity in crisis and how this is expressed in leadership communication. As previously noted, in the psychological study of decision makers under pressure, the imperative demand for crucial decisions to be made quickly and accurately entails a form of psychological stress that can be expected to reduce the information complexity of the individuals involved.<sup>80</sup>

In devising an independent measure of decision conditions, it is important to carefully define the term “stress” as it pertains to cognition complexity and decision making. Stress is the psychological strain that remains when the tension induced by environmental demands is not successfully overcome.<sup>81</sup> When stress exceeds the individual policymaker or decision making group’s coping resources, the ability to process complex information is disrupted. According to this definition, problems whose implications are of extreme importance receive a major share of the decision maker’s attention and psychological resources, leading to high levels of complexity. However, the decision maker’s resources can eventually become depleted when too many other demands are made on those resources or if the situation continues too long without a satisfactory solution emerging.<sup>82</sup> When the decision maker becomes overwhelmed, rushed, fatigued, or distracted, it becomes problematic and appears in cognitive processing. At that point, the decision maker’s level of complexity decreases and this is something that should be evident in leadership communications that can be measured.

In the analysis of the cognitive processing of information, there is an important differentiation between approaches toward complexity of communications; one that focuses on content and another on structure.<sup>83</sup> As the content of communications can easily be manipulated, its analysis is of limited utility. Structural approaches concentrate on variables such as the conceptual rules used in thinking, deciding, and

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<sup>80</sup> Holsti, O.R., *Crisis, Escalation, War*. (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1972).

<sup>81</sup> Antonovsky, A. *Health, stress, and coping*. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1979), 10.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>83</sup> Suedfeld, P., Tetlock, P.E., Integrative complexity of communication in international crises, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 1977, 169-184.

interrelating. Integrative complexity theory, which originated in 1961 with the work of Harvey, Hunt, and Schroder, is one of the best researched structural approaches.<sup>84,85</sup> The work of Tetlock and Suedfeld on measuring the integrative complexity of communications can be used as a benchmark for information processing structure.<sup>86</sup> This will be useful in providing a more reliable indicator of cognitive complexity over time and one that will be beneficial to this study.

Specifically, measurements of integrative complexity can be utilized to assess the degree to which a person is found to differentiate information, or recognize different perspectives, characteristics, or dimensions of stimuli. Integrative complexity is also useful for determining a person's ability to integrate information, or form connections among the differentiated perspectives, characteristics, or dimensions of the stimuli.<sup>87</sup> Important to my research, is that facet that differentiation and integration are stable personality traits of cognition that will translate well between cases and the policymakers I choose to study.<sup>88</sup> Separately, integrative complexity emphasizes differentiation and integration as aspects of information processing that will vary among individuals and also from situation to situation for each individual.<sup>89</sup> For the purposes of this project, it is extremely important to point out that environmental factors also play an important role in determining the level of complexity at which an individual processes information. The individual's complexity level, in turn, affects the behavioral response to particular environmental conditions. Conversely, changes in a decision maker's complexity will affect their decisions and thus the situation.

As previously discussed in relation Janis and Mann's model, experimental results that have emerged from psychological research on information processing and cognition have found there is agreement that stress sometimes decreases the complexity of information processing.<sup>90</sup> This impairment includes a lessened likelihood of accurately distinguishing between relevant and irrelevant information, reduced search for novel information, the suppression or ignoring of unpleasant inputs, and greater concentration of both incoming and outgoing communications to the in-group.<sup>91</sup> Long-term plans tend to be ignored in favor of stimulus-bound reactions, fine distinctions among items of information or among other participants in the crisis are abandoned, and responses and attitudes become increasingly stereotyped.<sup>92</sup>

Among national policymakers, crisis situations can be expected to have the greatest impact on cognitive integrative complexity because of the intense conditions of high risk. As identified, numerous studies have

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<sup>84</sup> Harvey, O.J., Hunt, D.E., Schroder, H.M. *Conceptual systems and personality organization*. (New York: John Wiley, 1961).

<sup>85</sup> Suedfeld, P., Tetlock, P.E., and Streufert, S., Conceptual/integrative complexity, *Motivation and personality: Handbook of thematic content analysis*, edited by C.P. Smith, 1992, 393-400.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 393-400.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 393-400.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 393-400.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., 393-400.

<sup>90</sup> Suedfeld and Tetlock, "Integrative complexity of communication in international crises", *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*. 171.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 169-184.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 171.

reported that a decrease in leaders' integrative complexity precedes the onset of violent conflict.<sup>93</sup> In other crises involving similar policy makers but were then resolved peacefully, leaders' complexity levels remained stable or rose from the early to late phases of crisis. Across cases of intense foreign policy crisis, it seems that the important variable is a policy maker's ability to retain high levels of cognitive complexity that assist in maintaining behavior functionality. Such findings also have counterparts in experimental literature.<sup>94</sup>

These conclusions are similar to experimental data obtained by psychologists studying various aspects of problem solving and analyzing the differentiation and integration of information in terms of complexity.<sup>95,96</sup> Differentiation refers to the characteristics or dimensions of stimuli that are recognized and taken into account in decision making. A differentiated characteristic may be regarded as an independent attribute perceived by the observer, along which the stimulus can be scaled. The same message, individual, or nation may be more or less well differentiated by different policymakers. In general, more complex information processors differentiate a larger number of characteristics in any given multidimensional stimulus. The more such dimensions are recognized, the more complex is the reaction of the individual to the stimulus. Integration refers to the development of complex connections among the differentiated characteristics. The complexity of integration depends on whether such characteristics are perceived as operating in isolation, in hierarchical interaction, or according to multiple, complex, and perhaps flexible patterns.

The combination of cognitive aspects of differentiation and integration has been accomplished by Tetlock and Suedfeld in a general dimension of simplicity-complexity in information processing, or more precisely a scale of integrative complexity.<sup>97,98</sup> At the simple end of the complexity scale, decisions are characterized by anchoring around a few salient reference points. For example, the perception of only one side of an argument or problem, the ignoring of subtle differences or similarities among other points of view, the perceiving of other participants, courses of action, and possible outcomes as being either totally good or totally bad, and a search for rapid and absolute solutions in order to achieve minimization of uncertainty and ambiguity.<sup>99</sup> At the complex end of the scale, open, compound, and flexible information processing takes place. This includes the use of many dimensions in an integrated and combined fashion, continued search for novel and further information, and the ability to consider multiple points of view simultaneously while integrating and responding flexibly to them.<sup>100</sup> According to these criteria, a policymaker operating on the simple end of the complexity scale does not consider multiple perspectives, dimensions, or alternatives. Consequently, he or

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<sup>93</sup> Suedfeld and Tetlock, Integrative complexity of communication in international crises, 169-184.

<sup>94</sup> Driver, 1962. Paulhus and Lim, 1994. Easterbrook, 1959.

<sup>95</sup> Harvey, O.J., Hunt, D.E., and Schroder, H.M. *Conceptual Systems and Personality Organization*. (New York: John Wiley, 1961).

<sup>96</sup> Schroder, H.M., Driver, M.J., and Streufert, S. *Human Information Processing*. (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1967).

<sup>97</sup> Suedfeld and Tetlock, Integrative complexity of communication in international crises, 169.

<sup>98</sup> Baker-Brown, G., Ballard, E. J., Bluck, S., deVries, B., Suedfeld, P., Tetlock, P. E. The conceptual/integrative complexity scoring manual, *Motivation and personality: Handbook of thematic content analysis*, edited by C.P. Smith, 1992, 400-418.

<sup>99</sup> Suedfeld, P., Tetlock, P.E., Psychological advice about foreign policy decision making: Heuristics, biases, and cognitive defects, *Psychology and social policy*, edited by P. Suedfeld and P. E. Tetlock, 1991, 51-70.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 51-70.

she would not meet predetermined standards of good cognitive processing, regardless of how successful a solution emerged.

Integrative cognitive complexity is normally measured based on scoring an analysis of a subject's statements, both written and oral. Complexity is scored on a 1-7 scale with nodal points of the scores 1, 3, 5, and 7. At the score of 1, the subject exhibits undifferentiated thinking, with no consideration of alternative dimensions or viewpoints. The nodal point of 3 marks differentiation, in which the subject recognizes and acknowledges more than one dimension or perspective as legitimate. The nodal point of 5 is achieved when the subject integrates dimensions or perspectives into a relational system. Higher order synthesis is required for a score of 7. As an example, theoretical thinking might be found at the highest level of complexity, as compared to empirical analysis at the level of 5. Transition points are represented by scores of 2, 4, and 6.<sup>101</sup> These cognitive complexity scores can then be correlated to conditions of stress.

Although cognitive complexity is only one aspect of leadership performance, stress and the structure of information processing during crises are theoretically linked. Therefore, an accurate analysis of cognitive complexity will serve my purposes as an effective measure of stress independent of decision making decisions and behavior in selected case studies. More specifically, in measuring the stress levels of policymakers in this research, my analysis will consider factors related to the two components of cognitive complexity and in doing so, accurately account for leadership stress levels. Systematic analysis based on an objective, quantitative assessment of leadership diplomatic communications will result in a measure of independent stress that can be used to justify the revision of Janis and Mann's model construct. For the purposes of clarity, the measure of cognitive complexity will ultimately serve to combine, or bridge, cognitive and motivational psychology to help improve a motivational model of decision making.

## RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

In devising an independent measurement of decision making conditions, this research project will be designed to bring the ideas and techniques of conceptual complexity theory to bear on crises in foreign policy, with a specific focus on measuring psychological stress. Insights developed by political scientists can thus be tested by a measurement technique clearly derived from laboratory research in non-experimental environments. In this format, the ideas of conceptual complexity will be magnified in scope from traditional psychological experiments. With this design, a further step can be made toward integrating significant theoretical and methodological advances when using the Janis and Mann model in the study of decision making.

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<sup>101</sup> Baker-Brown, Ballard, Bluck, deVries, Suedfeld, and Tetlock, The conceptual/integrative complexity scoring manual, 400-418.

As decision makers have deliberated critical decisions in historical cases of crisis, various levels of stress are likely to be present in their diplomatic communications that can specifically be evaluated for the purposes of determining the cognitive complexity of the leader in question. As I have identified the relationship between complexity and stress (i.e. the decline in complexity being a sign of stress), the distillation of cognitive complexity will then serve as an independent measure of the conditions of emotional turmoil, internal tension, and anxiety as it relates to policy maker decisional conflict during deliberation. The resultant levels of cognitive complexity can then be associated with decision making conditions that will yield an independent measure of stress.

Cognitive complexity is invariably studied across leaders, but this project is novel in that it will measure cognitive complexity of one leader in a time series over the course of a particular crisis. In practice, I will need to measure relative stress levels and this can be accomplished by measuring the complexity of leaders in ordinary situations and then again in situations of acute crisis. I will do this by setting up case studies in which to analyze policymakers at the peak of highly stressful situations of foreign policy crisis. In these cases, I will measure policy maker cognitive complexity, first during pre-crisis conditions in an effort to establish a baseline of routine operational levels of stress, and then again when crisis is considered to be fully developed. This will result in several data sets per case in which I will be able to comparatively analyze the relative difference between ordinary situations and that of acute stress to determine if leadership complexity declined or increased over the course of crisis.

In an effort to frame my analysis, I will attempt to answer the following questions:

- 1. Is pre-crisis cognitive processing complexity in leadership deliberation and decision making considered to be low, moderate, or high? (This analysis will serve to develop a baseline measurement of decision maker conditions, pressure, and tension at normal operational levels.)**
- 2. Is cognitive processing complexity in leadership deliberation and decision making during the acute and advanced phases of crisis considered to be low, moderate, or high? (The measurement of cognitive complexity during the acute and advanced stage of crisis can then be comparatively analyzed in relationship to pre-crisis cognitive complexity levels for the purposes of evaluating change.)**
- 3. Based on the decline or increase in cognitive complexity from pre-crisis to crisis, what types of behavioral responses are observed specific to the Janis and Mann crisis model of decision making? (An effort to show the links across complexity, stress, and behavior.)**

After measurements of cognitive complexity are taken during both pre-crisis and crisis phases of the cases that I select, after measuring the difference I will be able to make links between policy maker complexity levels and behavior responses over the course of the crisis. At this juncture, I will be faced with three possibilities:

The first possibility would demonstrate that cognitive complexity had declined during the course of crisis. As I previously demonstrated that there is an existing relationship between a loss of complexity and the kind of dysfunctional decision making behavioral pathologies that Janis and Mann identify, I would then have to compare Janis and Mann's specified behavioral response to the situation in which the policy maker finds themselves. A loss in complexity in this situation is perhaps linked to one of Janis and Mann's four dysfunctional behavioral pathologies; unconflicted adherence, unconflicted change, defensive avoidance, or hypervigilance. Even so, I will have to utilize Janis and Mann's model to decipher which of the four conditions Janis and Mann stipulate the policy makers find themselves in, while using the subjective determination of the policy maker's own assessment. From the beginning of the crisis to its full development, I will analyze the understanding of the policymaker at both ends in an effort to see if their understanding changes during the crisis period.

The second possibility could be an indication that cognitive complexity had increased during the course of crisis. As we have established the relationship between complexity and Janis and Mann's functional behavioral response, I would compare the policy maker's situation with Janis and Mann's specified response. A rise in complexity in this specific case may be linked to Janis and Mann's functional behavioral pathology, specific to that of vigilant information processing. It could be that in crises of longer duration, leaders can sometimes recover their ability to effectively process information, leading to an improvement in cognitive performance over protracted time. Regardless, I will again utilize Janis and Mann's model to analyze which of the behavior conditions Janis and Mann specify in which the decision maker finds themselves, and I will use the subjective assessment of the policy maker him or herself. From the initial phase of the crisis to full development, I will analyze the decision maker's individual point of view to record if their awareness changes over the course of the crisis situation. It is worth noting that sometimes leaders who have convinced themselves they can succeed may suffer dissociative reactions or breakdowns when overwhelmed by information indicating that they are heading to disaster in later stages of crisis.<sup>102</sup>

A third possibility might be that cognitive complexity remained the same during the course of crisis. As the cases that I have chosen for study are characterized by conditions of significant decision conflict that changes over the course of crisis, this is not likely to be the case. Even though a decline in complexity is related to Janis and Mann's dysfunctional decision making behaviors and an increase in complexity is associated with functional behavior toward constructive decisions, no measured or detectable change in complexity could

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<sup>102</sup> Lebow, R. N. *Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crisis*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), 116.



indicate one or a number of things. The absence of change in measured cognitive complexity scores in different phases of a crisis situation might signify the need for additional data to be collected, highlight the need for a more precise measurement of cognitive complexity, or indicate that decision conditions have indeed remained similar. Nonetheless, each of these possibilities will require further study in an effort to develop higher fidelity measurements.

Taking this discussion into consideration, the policymakers that I have chosen for this study are likely to experience significant stress in the selected cases. However, an attempt will be made to demonstrate that they may have been able to regain relatively high levels of cognitive information processing ability enabling avoidance of the dysfunctional behavior pathologies that Janis and Mann specify in their model. The decision conditions may result in the execution of functional behavior which, considering the crises in which the policy makers find themselves, is noteworthy. Even so, we will see what the results of the study bear out. Ultimately, through this specific cognitive complexity research, I will be able to measure decision conditions separately, enabling an accurate analysis of decision conditions and their relation to Janis and Mann's behavioral responses. This methodology will assist in accomplishing my objective of demonstrating the links between policy maker complexity and behavior during crisis.

#### PROPOSED CASES AND PRACTICAL ISSUES

As discussed, in this research project I will specifically consider two historical situations of foreign policy crisis in which American decision makers are faced with decisional dilemmas over conflicting threats. These cases are appropriate because they both involve high risk and entail the possibility of great loss causing the rapid rise of psychological stress. The particular cases that I have chosen are well suited for research in developing a cognitive measure of stress because they involve similar decision makers deliberating potential hostilities with a major foreign power, while stress levels changed and were effectively managed over the course of each crisis.

The combination of two similar cases involving American decision makers will effectively construe my thesis because both of the situations that I am choosing to study are indicative of significant foreign policy crisis that could have resulted in major war. Both of the selected cases contain policy maker decision conflict that was a source of high psychological stress because of time pressure that required decisions to be made that presented the risk of great loss. Even so, both crises are representative of good decision making that was considered to be successful specifically because they were resolved peacefully without war. The stressful decision making conditions in these cases are ideal for the study of complexity and its relationship to behavioral response because one would presume that these kinds of conditions would eventually cause war, not result in conflict resolution and peace. By their very nature, these nonviolent constructive results have been identified as benchmark examples of effective crisis decision making under perhaps the most complicated set of circumstances recently recorded in terms of risk. In this research project I will be able to

measure, and presumably find, that decision conditions change significantly over the course of crisis, eventually enabling behavioral pathologies that are functional and result in beneficial outcomes.

Considering my case selection, this project is solely focused on the perspective of decision conditions and policy maker behavior in relationship to foreign policy crises that were resolved through peaceful means. This project does not consider historical cases that ended in war, mainly because of interests in the study of conflict resolution. Case studies of foreign policy crises that ended in conflict are also an important area of research related to the measure of individual policy maker cognitive complexity and its relation to observed decision making behavior patterns that Janis and Mann identify. Once research methods can be validated concerning cognitive complexity as a measure of stress related to foreign policy behaviors in outcomes of peace, then academics can focus on replicating these findings utilizing case studies of foreign policy crisis that ended in war.

I specifically chose two strategic-level case studies for this project because of the type of information that is needed to code complexity and very specific requirements concerning the type and consistency of historical recordings over time. Scoring for integrative complexity is achieved through the conduct of archival analysis and the kind of documents that are needed for measuring cognitive complexity can be generalized to archived materials in policy maker communication in historic international relations. A policy maker's level of differentiation and integration can be derived from material containing public or private statements, and complexity coding technique can effectively measure any connected verbal discourse to which there is access. The range of research materials used for archival study are generally found in books, periodicals, and newspapers. For the purposes of this study, documentation must include adequate material to measure complexity before crisis and also during advanced stages of crisis. During crises of strategic proportions, these very specific requirements of foreign policy communications have been well documented in a wide variety of sources and are available for research and examination in historical archives. While other tactical and operational crises certainly merit study, their historical documentation is less detailed and not as accurate as thorough coverage of larger strategic crises.

The cases that I have selected are unique in the fact that they both involve U.S. Presidents and two of their direct advisors as the policy makers that will be examined. In these cases, public and private statements have been recorded and documented extensively, both preceding the crises and also throughout the most critical periods of tension. This type of information is precisely what I will need to code cognitive complexity. Concerning one of my cases, extensive work has also been accomplished in the transcription of U.S. Presidential audio recordings maintained in archives that should serve to increase the amount of data available while also improving accuracy. These historical materials are available in U.S. Presidential archives now held in their respective Presidential Libraries and in official records held by the U.S. Department of State. These U.S. governmental organizations will permit the time, space, and assistance necessary for the conduct

of advanced research. Access to these institutions is available as a visiting scholar both in person and through distance research. Nonetheless, this variety of information will yield adequate policy maker statements over the duration of the selected crises for the purposes of accurately measuring cognitive complexity.

The synthesis of these cases is the ideal compendium in which to independently measure decision making conditions, analyze key leader behavioral responses, and portray levels of policy maker complexity that resulted in good decisions. I will demonstrate that although these cases are characteristic of decision makers experiencing significant decisional conflict, their behavior is eventually devoid of the dysfunctional pathologies that Janis and Mann specify in their model, leading to good decisions at the culmination of crisis. This will serve as an effective construct for developing an independent measure of stress that can then be instrumental in the reformulation of Janis and Mann's decision making model.

#### CASE ONE: THE 1948 BERLIN CRISIS

Regarding my first case selection, I will examine the 1948 Berlin crisis and conduct an analysis of President Harry S. Truman's cognitive complexity of information processing during the foreign policy crisis. In the spring of 1948, the situation regarding the western allies and Berlin was considered to be extremely tense for President Truman. The United States was initially caught unaware of Russian military action in the German capital and the president was forced to weigh the balance between initiating war with Russia or retreating from Berlin in the face of the Soviet Union. Neither were good options and thus the president's dilemma is readily apparent.

The leading decision makers in the 1948 Berlin crisis who will be included in this study are the following key leaders:

- United States President: Harry S. Truman
- United States Secretary of State: George C. Marshall
- United States Military Governor of Berlin: Lucius D. Clay

As President of the United States in 1948, Harry Truman's approach to foreign policy and the field of national security was that of being the final decision maker. As a former military officer, Truman's ability to tolerate stress exceeded that of a great majority of his subordinates and he was often seen as unflappable. The character of Truman's decision responses was to assume personal responsibility for the situation at hand and make a clear-cut decision on the spot. He often made up his mind on the basis of the information he received and was often quoted for using the phrase, "the buck stops here." Truman's psychological image was that of the American leader who must bear full responsibility for clear choices affected the content of his decisions and the style in which he enforced them.

At the State Department, Truman needed a Secretary who would command respect in dealing with the Russians, take Administration direction, support staunch anti-communist policies, and also someone in whom he could place his full trust to execute orders; former U.S. Army General George C. Marshall did exactly these things and earned Truman's appointment. As U.S. Secretary of State, George Marshall's psychological perspectives and approach to foreign policy, both in his outlook and execution, were indicative of his military background. Marshall relied heavily on the insight and advice of experts that worked for the U.S. government. His previous military perspectives dominated his approach to the conduct of foreign policy in the Cold War setting of 1948 concerning east versus west. Marshall's individual images and experience reinforced his belief that subordinates should always support their superior officer.

The final American decision maker key to the formulation and implementation of American policy during the Berlin crisis was Lucius D. Clay, the Military Governor of the United States for Germany. From a psychological perspective, Clay's strong character and assertive personality ensured that he would fully exercise the powers conferred by his office and stretch the limits of discretionary authority extended to him by America. His self-assurance was firm, his decisiveness was sharp, and he fought with passion and intensity for the causes in which he believed. This self-confidence, combined with a quick grasp of essential information, gave General Clay an air of supreme authority as the key U.S. decision maker abroad in 1948. The U.S. Military Governor preferred to do his own work and reached decisions quickly, irreversibly, and alone. Once his mind was made up, it seemed that there was very little that anyone could do to change it.

Concerning data set generation for each of these key leaders, I will chart their individual integrative complexity scores over a time period between several sets of dates that will serve to measure decision maker conditions and changes that occurred during the course of the crisis. For the first sample, based on consensus in literature, I will consider the crisis as beginning on 24 June, the day the Russians claimed "technical difficulties" and severed all rail, canal, and road traffic between west Berlin and the western zones of Germany. Therefore, I will code as "pre-crisis" those statements made in the lead up to crisis, between 20 March and 23 June, 1948. For comparison purposes, my samples during crisis will be taken in two phases, between 24-30 June and again from 15-22 July, 1948, after almost one month of established U.S. airlift operations in which the crisis was fully developed. Statements will be coded as those of "acute crisis" made on 24-30 June, and "advanced crisis" from 15-22 July. The availability of materials that fall into these three coded categories will be similar and as a result, the number of scored paragraphs will be uniform from comparison to comparison. Therefore, I will perform all statistical analysis on equal sample sizes.

The three samples will include written statements and transcriptions of oral statements. My samples will include random sampling of both public statements as well as those intended for a private audience, which for the most part were specific members of Truman's cabinet and his close advisors. Sources will include

public statements gathered from the files of the Harry S. Truman Library and from the U.S. Department of State. Samples of private deliberations will primarily be obtained from transcripts of Truman's meetings with his cabinet on 26 June and 22 July, 1948.<sup>103</sup> Other private materials, such as letters and memoranda, will be obtained from the president's office files and the National Security files of the archives of the Harry S. Truman Library.

The Primary sources for the 1948 Berlin blockade will include:

- *Transcripts of vital speeches 1948*, transcribed by Jerry Hess, Papers of Harry S. Truman, President's Secretary's File, Harry S. Truman Library, Independence, MO, Box 203, Folders "NSC Meetings".
- *Truman cabinet meetings, transcripts from 24 June and 22 July 1948*, Department of State Records: Records of Policy and Planning, National archives, Washington, DC, Box 32.
- *The Forrestal Diaries*, ed. Walter Mills, New York: Viking Press, 1951.
- *Kenneth C. Royall papers, 1948-1949*. Royall archival material, 1948.
- *Lucius D. Clay Papers Archives - Transcriptions of 1948 teleconferences*, Lucius D. Clay, The George C. Marshall Foundation Library, Lexington, VA.
- Lucius D. Clay, *Decision in Germany*, Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1950.

An initial survey of source material indicates that there are a wide variety of statements available for the purposes of accomplishing my objective of measuring pre-crisis and crisis cognitive complexity. Large volumes of material are available for both President Truman and his advisors during this time period, specifically in the holdings of Truman Library's oval office files and archived national security files. The highlighted source material includes transcribed speeches, writings, correspondence, audiovisual materials, and other historical papers reflecting routine operational situations before tension escalated regarding Berlin. This collection also effectively documents policy maker statements after the development of crisis. Material from both conditions can effectively be coded for cognitive complexity and will effectively serve to measure decision maker changes over time.

Specifically, the first warning of the Russian blockade of Berlin and potential war came from then U.S. military governor of Berlin, General Lucius D. Clay. Archived transcriptions of teleconferences with Washington concerning maintaining the U.S. position in Berlin are available in the Clay Papers Archives and are a valuable inclusion in this study. Additionally, transcripts of Truman's cabinet meetings on 26 June and 22 July are available in archives, the two main dates that I am interested in surveying. Additionally, transcripts are also available from those same days from exclusive meetings between President Truman and Marshall on the

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<sup>103</sup> Samples to include those statements intended for a private audience, for the most part, Truman's cabinet and advisors. Sources will include statements gathered from the files of the Harry S. Truman Library in Independence, Missouri and the U.S. Department of State in Washington, D.C.

President's fear of having the Berlin situation develop as an issue that had the potential to ignite war. The statements gleaned from these written transcriptions of each decision maker will effectively serve to measure changes in complexity over time.

I will endeavor to gather as wide as possible a sampling of material from these individuals, from time frames in both pre-crisis and during the most intense portion of the crisis. I will use statements that were specifically directed at the crisis or, when this is not possible, utilize extracts that touched on some aspect of relevance to the crisis such as relations with the Soviet Union during this time period in the Cold War, defense policy, or post World War II European affairs. From these samples, the material to be analyzed for integrative complexity will be randomly selected. Thirty paragraphs will be selected for each decision maker for each of the three time periods (pre-crisis, acute, and advanced phases of crisis) into which the case has been subdivided. For example, when President Truman and two close advisors are completed, in total I will score 270 paragraphs of material. The scoring unit for the Berlin blockade will be defined as a paragraph, although short paragraphs may be combined and longer paragraphs that skip from theme to theme may be separated. The essential factor in identifying the statement is completion of the speaker's train of thought.

Regarding the measure of complexity and the formulation of scores, archival analysis of records of speeches and diplomatic communications by President Truman and his advisors will be conducted and scored for integrative complexity by measuring leadership effectiveness at combining the cognitive aspects of differentiation and integration in information processing. Historical records and sample analysis will be useful in comparing changes in information processing that take place between precise dates during the course of crisis. These historical diplomatic communications will be specifically coded based on the general dimension of integrative complexity with texts being scored on Tetlock and Suedfeld's 1-7 numerical scale (Tetlock and Suedfeld, 1977).<sup>104</sup> The numerically low end of the scale will be characterized by simple responses, gross distinctions, rigidity, and restricted information usage, while the higher ordinal end will signify complexity, fine distinctions, flexibility, and extensive information search and usage.<sup>105</sup> As an example, below are sample statements during the Berlin blockade from Truman's key advisors and staff that have been scored on integrative complexity.

- **Score of 1** - Single, undifferentiated perspective: "For many months, based on logical analysis, I have felt and held that war was unlikely for at least 10 years. Within the last few weeks, I have felt a subtle change in Soviet attitude which I cannot define but which now gives me a feeling that it may come with dramatic suddenness. I cannot support this change in my own thinking with any data or outward evidence in relationships other than to describe it as a feeling of a new tenseness in every Soviet individual with whom we have

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<sup>104</sup> Suedfeld and Tetlock, "Integrative complexity of communication in international crises", *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 169-184.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, 169.

official relations. I am unable to submit any official report in the absence of supporting data but my feeling is real. You may advise the Chief of Staff of this for whatever it may be worth if you feel it advisable.”<sup>106</sup>

- **Score of 3** - Differentiated alternatives: “The breakdown of negotiations in London may cause the USSR to undertake a program of intensified obstructionism and calculated insult in an effort to force the U.S. and other western Powers to withdraw from Berlin all representatives except a small Allied control authority group. The implementation of such a program could create a situation of great tension which might lead to armed clashes between Soviet personnel and that of the other occupying powers. The failure of the west to reach agreement on any question and indefinite adjournment of negotiations will result in accelerated consolidation of eastern Germany. The USSR will attempt to incorporate thoroughly the economic system of its zone into the Soviet economy and to orient the political system still more closely to the Soviet ideology. Soviet authorities will encounter difficulties in accomplishing both objectives because of the presence of U.S. officials and troops in Berlin. The presence there of this personnel hinders the ruthless and forcible communization of all eastern Germany, helps to sustain non-Communist opposition, and demonstrates that the U.S. does not intend to abandon or partition the country. Berlin, of course, could hardly serve as the capital of an eastern German state, should the USSR eventually establish one, so long as the western powers maintain troops in the city. The Kremlin is aware of the situation.”<sup>107</sup>
- **Score of 5** - Synthesis of differentiated perspectives: “Soviet leaders may become convinced that the U.S. has intentions of military aggression within the near future. In view of the well-known suspicions inherent in the minds of Soviet leaders, and the isolation of most of these leaders from the west, it is possible that the Politburo might come to this conclusion. Even if Soviet leaders did not expect imminent U.S. aggression, they might estimate that an ultimate military clash with the U.S. was inevitable and that, in view of current Soviet capabilities for overrunning Western Europe and the Near East, it would be to the USSR’s advantage to strike at these areas in 1948. Soviet leaders may estimate that their military superiority relative to Western Powers is now at its maximum. The USSR is faced with the prospect of (1) U.S. rearmament and presumably the rearmament by the U.S. of the western European powers now joined in a military alliance and (2) increasing U.S. production of strategic weapons and longer range aircraft which will increase U.S. capabilities for covering strategic

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<sup>106</sup> Lucius D. Clay to General Stephen J. Chamberlain, Director of Intelligence, Army General Staff, 05 March, 1948, *The Papers of General Lucius D. Clay: Germany 1945-1949*, edited by Jean Edward Smith, Vol. II (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1974), 568.

<sup>107</sup> U.S. Secretary of State, George C. Marshall Memorandum for the President, 16 March, 1948.

Soviet targets. These considerations might induce Soviet leaders to resort to military action. Even so, Soviet leaders have been in the past habitually cautious and deliberate, and consequently, might be reluctant to voluntarily incur the risks inherent in a major war. The occupation of Europe and the near East would impose serious problems on Soviet leaders and expose them to grave risks considering basic economic deficiencies of the USSR in terms of requirements for global war against the U.S.” <sup>108</sup>

**Score of 7** - Differentiated dimensions, higher order synthesis, and integrated outcomes:

“The Soviet military forces are estimated to have the current capability of over-running all of western Europe and the near East to Cairo within a short period of time. Soviet military forces along the frontiers of western Europe and the near East are estimated to be combat ready and generally so disposed that they could launch an immediate offensive. Since the end of the war, Soviet ground forces have been reorganized to provide a substantial increase in mobility, more effective firepower, and improved leadership on all levels. By exploiting the postwar political and economic instability in Europe and the rest of the world along traditional Marxist lines, Soviet leaders have already obtained very substantial results. The exploitation of such unstable conditions is the cheapest and safest method by which Soviet leaders can obtain their objectives. Even so, the determination at this time of whether or not Soviet leaders intend to employ their military capability rests essentially upon logic rather than upon evidence. We have no access to the thinking or decisions of the Kremlin but it probable that Soviet leaders do not presently intend to exercise their military capability. We have taken the position that the USSR would not commit itself to a course of action leading to war until, in the opinion of Soviet leaders, its economic potential had become adequate to sustain global war and until it possessed a reasonable stock of strategic weapons. It has also been assumed in some quarters that if, prior to the realization of the above objectives, the USSR were faced with impending stability in Europe, it would temporarily abandon its expansionist policy, consolidate its gains, and await the opportunity to promote and exploit new conditions of instability as they might develop in the future.” <sup>109</sup>

After recording pre-crisis and crisis cognitive complexity in this particular case, I can measure change in complexity (a decline or increase) over the course of the crisis. This will yield an understanding of a change in decision conditions during the crisis to which I can then compare Truman’s decision making behavior using the Janis and Mann model.

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<sup>108</sup> George C. Marshall, *Possibility of Direct Soviet Military Action During 1948.* 30 March 1948.

<sup>109</sup> President Harry S. Truman, *Possibility of Direct Soviet Military Action During 1948.* 30 March 1948.



Although the American policymaker supported the airlift of Allied supplies against the advice of some of his top advisors, we know that President Truman managed to make decisions that resulted in avoiding escalation to major conflict with the Soviet Union. Therefore, when measuring cognitive complexity in this case, I expect to find that President Truman's complexity steadily increased during the crisis. For example, hypothetically I might find that the average of Truman's pre-crisis complexity scores fall somewhere higher than 1 but lower than 3, while his crisis complexity scores end up being between 1 and 2. If I do find that decision maker complexity declined, I can then specifically demonstrate that this is likely to have resulted in some kind of dysfunctional decision making behavioral response that Janis and Mann have specified, i.e. defensive avoidance or hypervigilance when processing information.

Next, with an understanding of pre-crisis and crisis decision making conditions, I will use Janis and Mann's model to determine which situation Truman found himself in during the respective part of the crisis and also determine if his understanding changed over the duration of the time period. Then I will compare the measured decision conditions with the observed behavior response and be able to show links across complexity, stress, and behavior. Being able to demonstrate this relationship in the first case study will result in a positive development toward the development of an independent measure of stress through the use of the measurement of cognitive complexity.

#### CASE TWO: THE 1962 CUBA CRISIS

Concerning the second case, I will examine the 1962 Cuban missile crisis and conduct an analysis of President John F. Kennedy's cognitive complexity of information processing during the period of crisis. In October 1962, when Russia's movement of nuclear capable ballistic missiles into the western hemisphere was detected by the United States, it was considered to be a foreign policy crisis of the worst kind imaginable for President Kennedy. The U.S. was caught unaware and the president was forced to formulate a response in which he had to weigh the balance between responding to the initial Russian action with military force, or allowing the Soviet Union the freedom of action to threaten the U.S. with nuclear capable ballistic missiles in Cuba; all while avoiding the initiation of nuclear war with Russia. Of course there were no good options and the president's dilemma is clearly evident.

Leading decision makers in the 1962 crisis who will be included in this study are the following individuals:

- United States President: John F. Kennedy
- United States Secretary of Defense: Robert S. McNamara
- United States Secretary of State: Dean D. Rusk

As President of the United States in 1962, John F. Kennedy's role in American foreign policy and national decision making in 1962 was that of control as the central decision maker. A young and outgoing President, Kennedy was charismatic and highly competitive. The American was known for having the quick wit to process information in high pressure situations while making informed and intelligent decisions. From a psychological perspective, President Kennedy was an emotional leader who was not averse to taking risks when he deemed it to be beneficial. During 1962, Kennedy was also preoccupied with demonstrating resolve in light of stressful and humiliating events that he had endured early in his Presidency concerning American exploits against Cuba and by association, communism and the Soviet Union.

After Kennedy was elected, the American President offered the post of Secretary of Defense to Robert McNamara, a well-educated business executive who was also a former military officer in the United States Army Air Forces. At the Pentagon, Kennedy needed a Secretary of Defense who would take Administration direction, support anti-communist policies, and also someone in whom the U.S. President could place his full trust; this was Robert McNamara. Kennedy called on McNamara for advice on a wide range of issues beyond those of national security, including commerce, and matters regarding the American economy. From a psychological standpoint McNamara was firm in his opposition to Communism and a firm subordinate, thus it came as no surprise that he followed President Kennedy's lead in formulating anti-Soviet defense policies focusing on strategic arms buildup.

As U.S. Secretary of State in 1962, Dean Rusk's relationship to the President proved to be a significant factor in the making of American foreign policy during the Cuba crisis. From a psychological perspective, as a former military officer Rusk's sense of duty was profound. He was fully invested in the American Presidency at the outset of his tenure as U.S. Secretary of State. While Rusk had a quiet style of diplomacy that stayed involved in the details, he was not reticent to offer advice and speak his mind. Rather than serve the President as a co-author in the formulation of policy, when Kennedy made decisions Rusk mainly exhibited a loyal subordinate's concern of policy implementation. Rusk conceived of the U.S. Secretary of State as an assistant to the President and when making a judgement on a foreign policy issue, the Secretary was often influenced by the President's disposition. Although Rusk would raise questions and doubts, he seldom pressed them to finality.

Concerning data set generation for each of these key leaders during the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, I will chart changes in individual integrative complexity scores between two specific dates that will serve to measure decision maker conditions and changes over the course of the crisis. For the first sample, based on consensus in literature, I will consider the crisis as beginning on 16 October, the day the president received conclusive evidence that Soviet ballistic missiles were present at bases in Cuba. Therefore, I will code as "pre-crisis" those statements made in the lead up to crisis, between 15 July and 15 October, 1962. For comparison purposes, my samples during crisis will be taken in two phases; first of "acute crisis" between 16-22 October

when the U.S. enforced a naval blockade of Soviet forces from Cuba, and again of “advanced crisis” from 23-28 October, 1962, encompassing almost a week of tense negotiations between Washington and Moscow that led up to an agreement to remove the Russian missiles from Cuba. It is worth noting that the availability of materials that fall into these three coded categories will be similar and as a result, the number of scored paragraphs will be uniform from comparison to comparison. Therefore, in this study I will perform all statistical analysis on equal sample sizes.

Primary sources for the 1962 Cuban missile crisis will include:

- *The Cuban missile crisis of 1962*, David Larson, ed., Houghton Mifflin, Boston. *Vital Speeches*, 1962.
- *The President Kennedy Executive Committee audio recordings*, transcribed by Sheldon M. Stern in association with ‘*The Final Failure: “Listening and Learning: Insights from the JFK ExComm Tapes.”*’
- *Averting the final failure, John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings*, Sheldon M. Stern, Stanford University Press, 2003.
- *Cuban Missile Crisis archives*, U.S. Department of State.
- *Meetings on Cuba: The White House*, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, 16 October, 1962.

The samples will include written statements, and transcriptions of recorded oral statements. Data will also include a random sampling of both public statements as well as those intended for a private audience, which for the most part were Kennedy’s close advisors. Sources will include public statements gathered from the files of the John F. Kennedy Library and from the U.S. Department of State. My sample of private deliberations will primarily be obtained from transcriptions of audiotapes made of ExComm meetings of 16 and 27 October, 1962.<sup>110</sup> Declassification and release of the White House tapes, especially a more exacting and precise transcription of the audio contents by Sheldon Stern, a long serving historian at the John F. Kennedy Library, will facilitate my search for private statements. These specific transcriptions of the tapes hope to bring to light new insights to studying the president’s cognitive complexity and will also provide a larger body of data in which to facilitate systematic analysis.<sup>111</sup> Other private materials, such as letters and memoranda, will be obtained from the president’s office files and the National Security files of the archives of the John F. Kennedy Library.

An initial survey of source material concerning the Cuban missile crisis indicates that there are a wide variety of statements available for the purposes of accomplishing my objective of acquiring measurements of cognitive complexity during separate phases of the crisis. Large volumes of material are available from both

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<sup>110</sup> Samples to include those statements intended for a private audience, for the most part, Kennedy’s Ex Comm advisors. Sources will include statements gathered from the files of the John F. Kennedy Library in Boston, Massachusetts and U.S. Department of State in Washington, D.C.

<sup>111</sup> The sample of private deliberations to include transcriptions of tapes made by Sheldon Stern of the ExComm meetings that occurred from 16-27 October, 1962.

President Kennedy and his advisors during this time period in 1962 during Executive Committee meetings, specifically in the holdings of Kennedy Library's president's office files and archived national security files. The highlighted source material includes transcribed speeches, writings, correspondence, audio materials, and other papers reflecting routine operational situations before the situation with Cuba developed into crisis. This collection also effectively documents policy maker statements after the development of crisis. Of significant value, are Stern's transcriptions of the Kennedy White House tapes that have been transcribed with an exacting level of precision.

Specifically, President Kennedy and his brother Robert F. Kennedy both make lengthy contributions to the ExComm meetings held at the White House on 16 and 27 October that were captured on audio recordings. The White House Tapes also contain significant audio dialogue from both Robert McNamara and Dean Rusk of extensive course of action deliberations over military action. The White House ExComm tapes contain a large amount of data available for our purposes that can be effectively coded for cognitive complexity in distinct phases of the Cuban missile crisis. For example, there are over forty-three hours of declassified recordings that President Kennedy secretly made of meetings with his top advisors during the two weeks in late October 1962. The material on these tapes account for slightly more than half of all audio statements recorded at the White House during the crisis.<sup>112</sup> The statements gleaned from audio file transcriptions of each decision maker will effectively serve to measure changes in complexity over time.

Similar to my first case, I will gather as many statements from the individuals of interest as possible, from time frames both pre-crisis and during the most intense portion of the crisis. Of course, I will use writings and transcribed oral statements that were directed specifically to the crisis and if this is not possible, those that touched on some aspect of relevance to the crisis such as relations with the Soviet Union, defense policy, or Latin American affairs. From these samples, the material to be analyzed for integrative complexity will be randomly selected. Thirty paragraphs will be selected for each decision maker for each of the three time periods (pre-crisis and acute/advanced phases of crisis) into which the case has been subdivided. To illustrate, when President Kennedy and two close advisors are completed, in total I will score 270 paragraphs of material. The scoring unit for the 1962 Cuba crisis will also be defined as a paragraph, although short paragraphs may be combined and longer paragraphs that skip from theme to theme may be separated. The essential factor in identifying the statement is completion of the speaker's train of thought.

Regarding the measure of complexity and coding, archival analysis of speeches and diplomatic communications by President Kennedy and his advisors will be sampled and scored for integrative complexity similar to the first case, measuring leadership effectiveness at being able to differentiate and integrate aspects of information in information processing. The historical records highlighted above will be

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<sup>112</sup> Stern, S.M. *The Cuban Missile Crisis in American Memory: Myths Versus Reality*. (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012.)

useful in comparing changes in information processing that take place between precise dates during the course of crisis. The historical diplomatic communications will be analyzed and coded based on Suedfeld and Tetlock's general dimension of integrative complexity with texts scored on a 1-7 numerical scale (Tetlock and Suedfeld, 1977).<sup>113</sup> The numerically low end of the scale will be characterized by simple responses, gross distinctions, cognitive rigidity, and restricted information usage, while the higher ordinal end will signify complexity, fine distinctions, flexibility, and extensive information search and usage.<sup>114</sup> For illustration purposes, below are sample CMC statements from Kennedy's ExComm scored on integrative complexity:

- **Score of 1** - Single, undifferentiated perspective: "You know, it seems to me we're missing a bet here. I think that we ought to take this case to – send directly to Khrushchev by fast wire the most violent protest, and demand that he – that he stop this business and stop it right away, or we're going to take those SAM-sites out immediately. That's what I'd tell him. I'd tell him this is a – I'd just use one of the messages he sent us and I'd send it right off, now, I wouldn't even talk to anybody about it. We sat for a week, and everybody was in favor of doing it, and I'd make that part of the message. I'd tell him we're going to conduct surveillance, as announced by the President, and one shot and in we come, and he can expect it. If he wants to sit down and talk about this thing, he can call off his gunfire and do it right away."<sup>115</sup>
- **Score of 3** - Differentiated alternatives: "Your question suggests the reason why we have made a great effort to achieve nonnuclear options, so that we cannot have nuclear war forced on us because we have no other choice. Suppose you were to start from the premise that nuclear war is unthinkable and that you are not capable of fighting a nonnuclear war. If that is true, then you have no military foundation at all for your policy. No sane man wants nuclear war, or any kind of war. But war has to be conceivable in support of vital national interests. Otherwise you have no real national power. You have to meet three tests. First, you have to have the power to support your policy. Second, you have to know you have that power. Third, the other side has to know you have that power, and he has to believe that you will use it if your vital interests are threatened."<sup>116</sup>
- **Score of 5** - Synthesis of differentiated perspectives: "Wars solve no problems by themselves. They only give us another chance to work on the problems that lead to wars. In fact, the problems of war and the problems of peace cannot be separated from each other. Individual

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<sup>113</sup> Suedfeld and Tetlock, "Integrative complexity of communication in international crises", *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 169-184.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, 169.

<sup>115</sup> United States Secretary of State Dean Rusk during the National Security Council Executive Committee meeting on 27 October, 1962. Kennedy ExComm presidential recordings 16 October, 1962, 57.

<sup>116</sup> Robert S. McNamara, Secretary of Defense, ExComm meetings 16 October, 1962. McNamara public statements 1962.

freedom is both a condition and an objective of a peaceful world, and inequality of opportunity is as much a source of international difficulties as it is an obstacle to domestic tranquility. We need better schools not only to train scientists and engineers for national defense, but also to produce experts who can find economical ways to turn salt water into fresh. And we need time to educate humanists who can teach us how to use less of our working time destroying each other and less of our leisure time destroying ourselves. These problems are the greatest challenge that this occasion puts before us.”<sup>117</sup>

- **Score of 7** Differentiated dimensions, higher order synthesis, and integrated outcomes: “But fortunately the goals of deterrence, of defense, and of arms control are not always in conflict. For example, when we improve our command and control systems, we improve our deterrent to aggression and, at the same time, we decrease the chance of a completely uncontrolled war, should deterrence fail. We have installed a number of both administrative and physical safeguards for our nuclear weapons which reduce as far as possible the chances of unauthorized use. The great emphasis we have placed on forces which can survive a nuclear attack from the Soviet Union not only serves to deter Soviet aggression but also greatly reduces the pressure on us to act precipitately in a crisis, thus decreasing the danger of inadvertent or accidental war.”<sup>118</sup>

After I have recorded pre-crisis and crisis average complexity scores in this particular case, I can then measure the difference between them. This will yield an understanding of the change in complexity over the course of the crisis to which I can then compare Kennedy’s decision making behavior using Janis and Mann’s model.

Although Kennedy chose to execute a more benign naval blockade of Russia against the advice of some of his top advisors who recommended the conduct of more robust military strikes against Russia in Cuba, we know that President Kennedy was able to make decisions over 13 critical days that averted escalation to major nuclear war with the Soviet Union. Taking this into consideration, I expect to find that President Kennedy’s complexity was initially low (at times his condition was such that he could scarcely speak) but steadily increased during the crisis. For example, I might find that the average of Kennedy’s pre-crisis complexity scores fall somewhere between 3 but lower than 5, while his crisis complexity scores rise to between 5 and 7 by the “critical Saturday”. If I do find that decision maker complexity improved, I can then specifically demonstrate that this is likely to have resulted in a functional decision making behavioral response that Janis and Mann have specified, i.e. the vigilant processing of information. Being able to demonstrate this

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<sup>117</sup> Robert S. McNamara, Secretary of Defense, address. McNamara public statements 1962.

<sup>118</sup> Robert S. McNamara, Secretary of Defense, *State Department Briefing: Five Goals of U.S. Foreign Policy*. McNamara public statements 1962.

relationship in a second case study will result the development of an independent measure of stress using the measurement of cognitive complexity.

Next, with an understanding of pre-crisis and crisis decision making conditions, I will use Janis and Mann's model to determine which situation Kennedy found himself in during the respective part of the crisis and determine whether or not his understanding changed over the specified time period. Then I will compare the measured decision conditions with the observed behavior response and be able to show links across complexity, stress, and behavior. Being able to demonstrate this relationship in a second case study will demonstrate the utility of the measurement of cognitive complexity as an independent measure of stress.

## CONSIDERATIONS

While the cases chosen for this project are similar in various facets, there are also important differences that merit mention. To illustrate, the 1948 Berlin blockade was a fundamental foreign policy crisis between the Americans and the Soviets that took place in Europe, far from the shores of North America. While stress levels were high, the domestic political agenda of the Truman Administration often took priority over potential foreign policy impediments that were at times more convenient to ignore. President Truman and his cabinet reacted to the situation in Germany only after Berlin became a significant foreign policy crisis.

On the other hand, the 1962 Cuba crisis presented the United States with a significant Soviet threat of strategic proportions in the western hemisphere, in close proximity to American soil. As the Soviet Union and Havana drew closer to action, the stress levels of American decision makers began to climb. President Kennedy reacted to the situation in Cuba quickly by consulting with his close advisors and formulating a plan of action before it became a significant foreign policy crisis in the public eye. Domestic political concerns of the Kennedy Administration were also a central driver in decision making that took place over the famous thirteen days.

Concerning data collection and measuring integrative complexity, there are some issues that need to be considered. As only published documents are available from these crisis periods (in the 1962 case, audio tapes as well), although sampling will be random, data will be taken from a biased sample. One can hope that scholarly material, even if not complete, is at least reasonably representative in integrative complexity. It is important to point out that any particular ideology or course of action can be associated with any level of structural complexity. Also, it is important to note that we clearly do not have an experimental situation where variables have been manipulated by the investigators. For this reason, causal relationships will be difficult to establish. On the other hand, my data will have high external validity as it was produced by actual national leaders trying to find viable solutions to crises in reality.

It should also be noted that the level of complexity of a policy, a decision, or a statement has no implications for an assessment of appropriateness, practicality, effectiveness, or morality. These characteristics can be evaluated only in light of the specific circumstances, responses, and available options. It should also be emphasized that, given reasonable length, almost any verbal material can be scored for complexity regardless of era, language, or topic. Thus, the measure of cognitive complexity and its application to historical literature is well suited for this research.

In the case of political speeches, an interesting issue arises when a complexity score may be attributed to a speaker who did not write his own statement. Very high correlations are typically found between the complexity level of material known to have been personally written by the leader and that of the material written by an aide but disseminated in the name of the leader.<sup>119</sup> Initially, leaders are likely to select ghostwriters whose thinking processes conform to their own and further, particularly in the case of important diplomatic communications, leaders usually proof read the statement beforehand and make any adjustments deemed necessary. Public transmission constitutes an endorsement that is not routinely made if there is a clash between how the message is phrased and the leader's level of information processing.<sup>120</sup>

In summary, after measuring crisis decision making conditions through the analysis of cognitive complexity in these case studies, associations can be made between cognitive complexity, stress, and behavior. The outcome will result in an independent measure of stress that will be of utility when using Janis and Mann's decision making construct. Not only does this amend the circularity present in Janis and Mann's theoretical assumptions, it will also contribute an empirical measure of decision conditions to the Janis and Mann model. This advancement will increase the utility of the Janis and Mann model as a practical construct for the study of behavior and decisions, while also enabling a better understanding of the involvement of stress in decision making situations of foreign policy crisis. This project effectively combines, or bridges, cognitive and motivational psychology to help improve Janis and Mann's motivational model of decision making.

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<sup>119</sup> Guttieri, K., Wallace, M., Suedfeld, P. Integrative Complexity of American Decision Makers in the Cuban Missile Crisis, *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 1995, 595-621.

<sup>120</sup> Suedfeld and Tetlock, "Integrative complexity of communication in international crises", *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 169-184.



## **CHAPTER 3 – CASE ONE DATA SET**

### **CASE ONE: THE BERLIN BLOCKADE - MEASURING INTEGRATIVE COMPLEXITY TO DETERMINE STRESS LEVELS**

The main purpose of this chapter is to initiate a psychological analysis of major American policymakers who found themselves under conditions of increasing pressure during the Berlin crisis in 1948. As there was no reliable measure of individual stress levels for key U.S. policy makers during the 1948 crisis, evaluation of individual integrative complexity will enable an independent measure of the decision conditions of key American policy makers. Ultimately, this chapter will serve to highlight links between decision related stress and cognitive complexity.

The Berlin Blockade of 1948 is an unique case study in which to examine decision making conditions of stress and affective behavior because it was the first post-World War II crisis in the central balance between the two new superpowers in the international system: the United States and the Soviet Union. The Berlin crisis also marked the first open and direct confrontation between the principal Cold War antagonists, resulting in a dramatic increase in threat perception, time pressure, and probability of war that brought a marked increase in psychological stress. In Berlin, military forces faced each other directly across the Cold War truce lines which divided East from West. No reliable rules or conventions were available to guide their foreign policies and therefore, decision conditions were unprecedented. During the crisis itself, mutually acceptable limits of behavior gradually emerged. The threshold between peace and war was discovered, and a pattern of mutual restraint was established which served to guide policymakers during the crisis. Therefore, the 1948 Berlin crisis is significant not only because of the stressful conditions that the first open and direct superpower confrontation generated, but also because it produced decision making behavior that was considered to be a success, resulting in a peaceful outcome during the first major international crisis of the Cold War.

#### **BERLIN 1948, PRE-CRISIS PERIOD**

Leading up to the Soviet Union's blockade of Berlin, the "pre-crisis period" began when Soviet Marshal Vassily D. Sokolovsky turned and walked out of the Allied Control Council meeting that was held on 20 March, 1948. Defining pre-crisis as an action that leads to an increase in threat perception and the sense of need for a foreign policy response, this conspicuous Russian diplomatic action certainly fulfilled these requirements for American decision makers. Both the perception of threat and the need to deal with it were further heightened by gradually increasing Soviet restrictions on Western access to Berlin over the next three months. The pre-crisis period lasted until 24 June, when the Soviet Union's imposition of a full blockade on Allied supply lines marked the advent of the "crisis" period.

The key American decision makers during the pre-crisis period were President Harry S. Truman, Secretary of State George C. Marshall, and the American Military Governor in Germany, U.S. Army General Lucius D. Clay. While other officials also played a significant part in the decision making process on Berlin (notably Under Secretary of State Robert Lovett, Secretary of Defense James Forrestal, Secretary of the Army Kenneth Royall, Army Chief of Staff Omar Bradley, and the State Department's Political Advisor in Germany, Robert Murphy), Truman, Marshall, and Clay were the key decision makers as their positions within the decision making structure was central, and the influence they exercised on U.S. policy was fundamental. Clay, despite his subordinate place in the official hierarchy, played such a crucial part in both the formulation and implementation of U.S. policy in Germany that he must be included in the group of key decision makers.

For the purposes of conducting a psychological analysis of decision conditions facing these American policy makers during pre-crisis, this study will measure routine operational stress levels through the analysis of leadership cognitive complexity, develop an individual understanding of their view of the increased threat from a motivational perspective, and then analyze policy maker behavior during the pre-crisis period. To facilitate this analysis, chosen American decision makers will be studied throughout the pre-crisis period of approximately three months. For the purposes of precision in the conduct of this research, pre-crisis will be defined as the time period between 20 March - 23 June, 1948.

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#### **ANALYTICAL FRAME – QUESTION ONE**

**1. Is pre-crisis cognitive processing complexity in leadership deliberation and decision making considered to be low, moderate, or high? (This analysis will serve to develop a baseline measurement of decision making conditions, pressure, and tension at normal operational levels.)**

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#### **INTEGRATIVE COMPLEXITY SCORING OF PRESIDENT TRUMAN IN PRE-CRISIS**

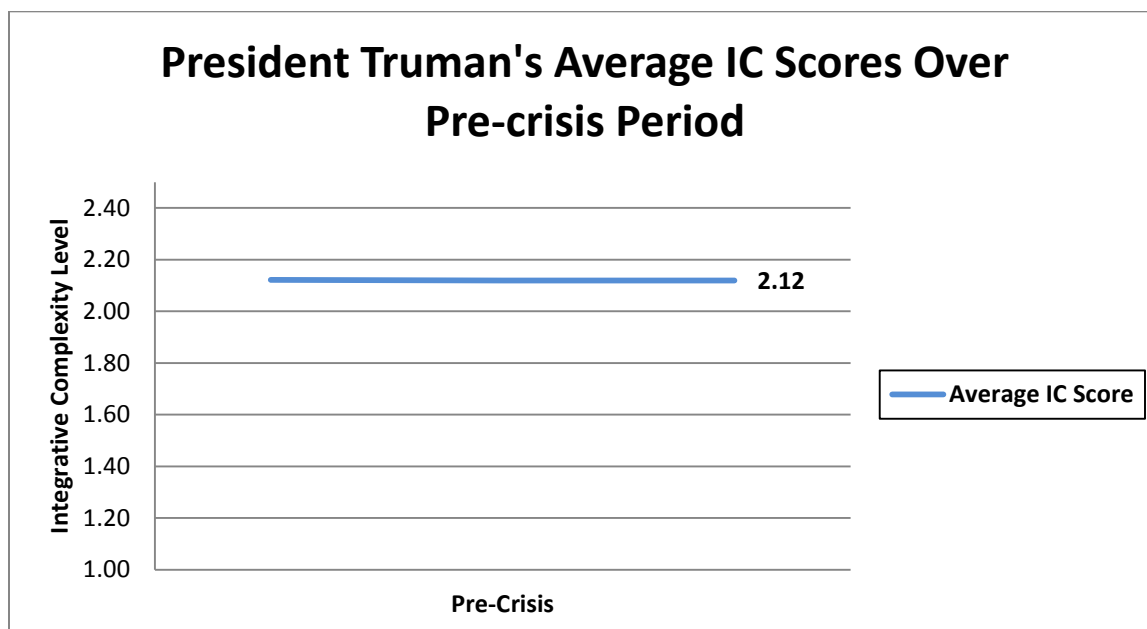
Turning to a psychological analysis of American leadership in the Berlin crisis, the first central decision maker is U.S. President Harry S. Truman. Beginning with a measure of President Truman's cognitive complexity, 30 paragraphs were randomly sampled from public speeches and private statements that the U.S. President made during the time period between 20 March - 23 June, 1948, and coded for integrative complexity (IC).<sup>121</sup> A large number of paragraphs were randomly selected from a wide variety of speeches and statements that Truman made during the pre-crisis time period, specifically to account for the variance in integrative complexity scores that might be generated due to the topic of the speech or the subject of the statement. As

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<sup>121</sup> See Appendix A for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.

an example, if Truman gave two speeches in the same day and one was about the U.S. determination to stand up to Soviet aggression, while the other was about the need for international understanding and cooperation between Allied nations facing the Soviets, there might be a substantive difference in integrative complexity scoring between the two speeches on separate subjects although they occurred only hours apart from each other. If samples were taken from only one speech, scoring would likely present a less accurate picture of Truman's mean integrative complexity than if paragraphs were randomly sampled from both speeches. Therefore, taking the mean integrative complexity scores from at least 30 randomly sampled passages of myriad speeches and statements that Truman gave during the pre-crisis period, will likely yield a more accurate and stable picture of the Presidents mean integrative complexity score. For these reasons, this methodology was used for not only President Truman, but also in studying the integrative complexity of the other key leaders.

In randomly sampling paragraphs from speeches and statements during the pre-crisis time period, between the independent scoring of three expert integrative complexity coders, President Truman's mean integrative complexity score was found to be a 2.12 on a scale of 7 (see Figure 1).



**Figure 1 - President Truman's average IC scores from pre-crisis to the beginning of crisis <sup>122</sup>**

Truman's pre-crisis cognitive complexity in leadership deliberation and decision making was found to be between low and low-to-moderate. As President Truman began to worry about the Russian threat during the pre-crisis period, this reading will serve as Truman's baseline measurement for decision making conditions of stress, pressure, and tension at normal operational levels. Analysis of Truman's integrative complexity (IC)

<sup>122</sup> See Appendix A for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.

can be summarized by a typical passage that scored at an IC code of 2, or low integrative complexity that marks an emergent differentiation of alternatives.

- **Score of 2** – Emergent differentiation of alternatives: "There is a very great difference between the citizens in China, between the liberal element and the Communists. There are a great many liberals in China. I talked to one of them just the day before yesterday. There are a great many of them who have been educated in this country, and they are those people who believe in government by the people. We would like to see them included in the broadening of the base of the Chinese Government."<sup>123</sup>

The crucial aspect of a score of 2 is the recognition of looking at the same issue in different ways or along different dimensions. However, differentiations at this level are emergent rather than fully developed. On average, Truman exhibited the expression of emergent alternatives during pre-crisis. The critical indicator for a score of 2 is the potential or conditional acceptance of different perspectives while the author may not explicitly develop the alternative dimension or perspective. In this passage for example, Truman clearly recognized two different perspectives of the citizens in China but only developed the single dimension of the liberal element, qualifying for a score of 2.

Considering other illustrations that consistently scored on the low end of the IC scale that contributed to Truman's low mean integrative complexity score, during pre-crisis American communication was also characterized by single dimensional thinking. For example, in a quantitative coding of pre-crisis cable traffic, the American Administration spent increasing amounts of time viewing the U.S. issues in Berlin from a single perspective opposing the Soviet Union:

- **Score of 1** - "But the situation in the world today is not primarily the result of natural difficulties which follow a great war. It is chiefly due to the fact that one nation has not only refused to cooperate in the establishment of a just and honorable peace, but - even worse - has actively sought to prevent it. That nation is the Soviet Union."<sup>124</sup>
- **Score of 1** - "We will have to take risks during the coming year, risks perhaps greater than any this country has been called upon to assume. We must be prepared to meet the danger posed by the Soviets with sober self-restraint and calm and judicious action if we are to be successful in our leadership for peace."<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> Truman, H.S., "The President's News Conference", Statements for public record, 11 March, 1948.

<sup>124</sup> Truman, H.S., "Special Message to the Congress on the Treaty to the Freedom of Europe", Statements for public record, 11 March, 1948.

<sup>125</sup> Truman, H.S., "St. Patrick's Day Address in New York City", Statements for public record, 17 March, 1948.

- **Score of 1** - "You know of the sincere and patient attempts of the democratic nations to find a secure basis for peace through negotiation and agreement. We have tried to settle the questions arising out of the war on a basis which would permit the establishment of a just peace. But the record stands as a monument to the good faith and integrity of the democratic nations of the world. The agreements we did obtain, imperfect though they were, could have furnished the basis for a just peace - if they had been kept. But they were not kept. They have been persistently ignored and violated by the Soviet Union."<sup>126</sup>
  
- **Score of 1** - "Since the close of hostilities, the Soviet Union and its agents have destroyed the independence and democratic character of a whole series of nations in Eastern and Central Europe. It is this ruthless course of action, and the clear design to extend it to the remaining free nations of Europe, that have brought about the critical situation in Europe today."<sup>127</sup>
  
- **Score of 1** - "Most of the countries of the world have joined together in the United Nations in an attempt to build a world order based on law and not on force. Most of the members support the United Nations earnestly and honestly, and seek to make it stronger and more effective. The Soviet Union, however, has persistently obstructed the work of the United Nations by constant abuse of the veto."<sup>128</sup>

As these statements illustrate, internal communication failed to present alternative positions and was characterized by a lack of differentiation, marked by very low integrative complexity, or a quantitative score of 1.

#### INTEGRATIVE COMPLEXITY SCORING OF SECRETARY MARSHALL IN PRE-CRISIS

Continuing the psychological analysis of American leadership in the Berlin crisis, the second American leader crucial to U.S. decision making during the pre-crisis phase was Secretary of State George C. Marshall. Turning to the study of Marshall's cognitive complexity, identical to the integrative complexity methodology executed previously for President Truman, 30 paragraphs were randomly sampled from the speeches that the U.S. Secretary of State gave during the time period between 20 March - 23 June, 1948, and scored for integrative complexity.<sup>129</sup>

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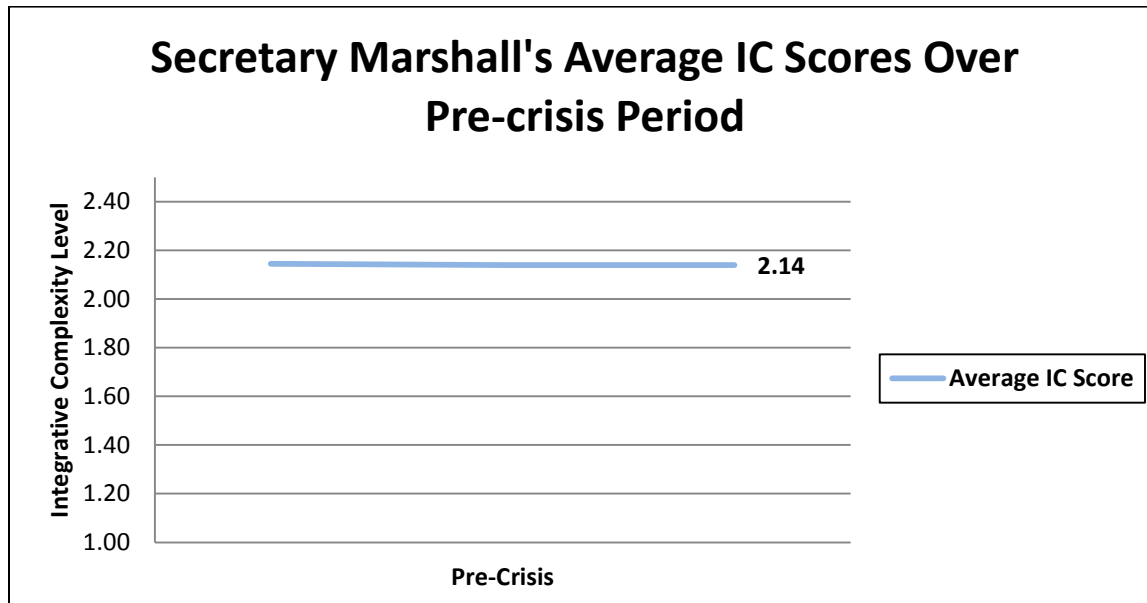
<sup>126</sup> Truman Administration Summary of Telegrams, President's Secretary's Files, 28 April, 1948.

<sup>127</sup> Truman, H.S., "Letter to Secretary Forrestal", *Public Papers of Harry S. Truman*, 17 May, 1948.

<sup>128</sup> Truman Administration Summary of Telegrams, 16 June, 1948.

<sup>129</sup> See Appendix A for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.

In the random sampling of paragraphs from all of the speeches during the pre-crisis time period, between three expert integrative complexity coders, Secretary Marshall's mean integrative complexity score was found to be a 2.14 on a scale of 7 (see Figure 2).



**Figure 2 - Secretary Marshall's average IC scores from pre-crisis to the beginning of crisis** <sup>130</sup>

Marshall's pre-crisis cognitive complexity in leadership deliberation and decision making was found to be between low and low-to-moderate. As Secretary Marshall's attention began to be increasingly occupied with the Russian threat to Germany during pre-crisis period, this reading will serve as Marshall's baseline measurement for decision making conditions of pressure, stress, and tension at normal operational levels. Analysis of Marshall's integrative complexity can be summarized by a typical passage that scored at an IC code of 2, or low integrative complexity that marks an emergent differentiation of alternatives.

- **Score of 2** – Emergent differentiation of alternatives: "There is an overwhelming demand for some agreement to wipe out fear of war and to bring about a return to normal conditions, and therefore strong resentment of any statement or lack of action that appears contrary to the fulfillment of that desire. My friends, these great desires are impelled by deep emotions but those emotions must not lead us into ill-advised and trustful actions which hazard the future of this country. I am sure that no one's desire is greater than mine to find a basis for peaceful security and a return of general prosperity to the world. But it is my official duty to

<sup>130</sup> See Appendix A for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.

see that this country is not misled by its emotions into commitments or actions which would threaten our future."<sup>131</sup>

The key characteristic of a score of 2 is the acknowledgement of at least two distinct ways of dealing with the same information. However, differentiations at this level are emergent rather than fully developed; this was a defining attribute of Marshall's average integrative complexity levels during pre-crisis. The critical indicator for a score of 2 is the potential or conditional acceptance of different perspectives or dimensions while the author may not explicitly develop the alternative dimension or perspective.

In the passage above for example, while Marshall demonstrated awareness of two different approaches to bring a return to normal conditions, the Secretary only developed the dimension of the dangers caused by emotions. Marshall clearly stated his awareness of alternative futures based on the discussion of subsequent time, but failed to differentiate another approach to achieve that end. Marshall acknowledged the end importance of a basis for peaceful security, qualifying for a score of 2. At measured complexity levels during the pre-crisis period, Secretary Marshall did not believe that Russian actions were grounds for U.S. military intervention. In general, the U.S. Secretary of State recognized the potential of looking at the Berlin issue in different ways but did not necessarily view the situation as a threat that required military action.

#### INTEGRATIVE COMPLEXITY SCORING OF GENERAL CLAY IN PRE-CRISIS

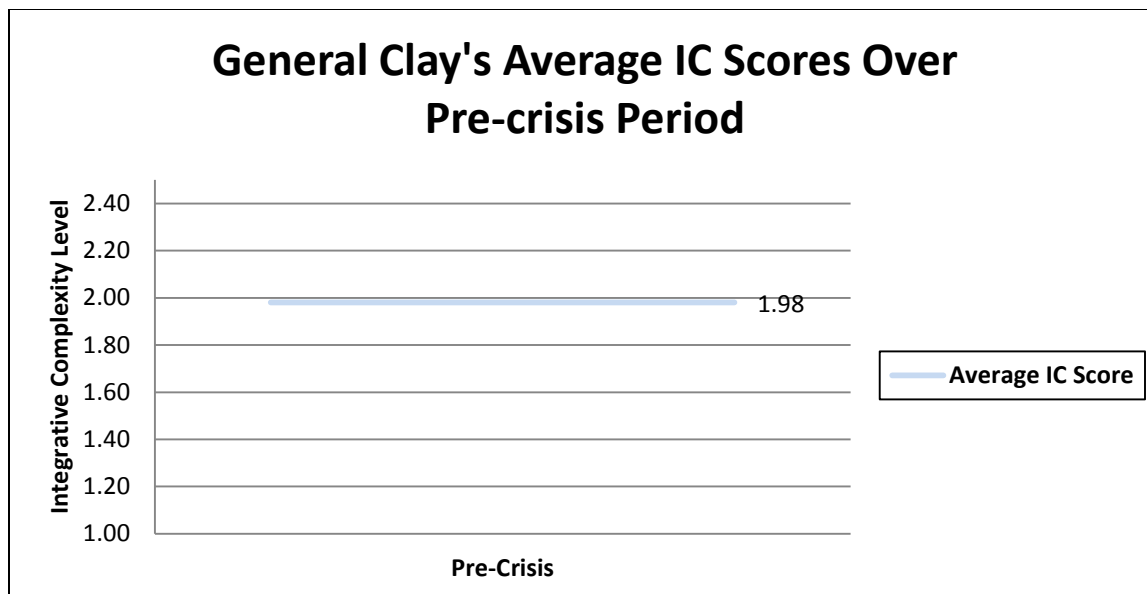
Continuing the psychological study of American leadership in the Berlin crisis, the final American decision maker key to the formulation and implementation of American policy in Germany was Lucius D. Clay. Turning to the study of General Clay's cognitive complexity, identical to the integrative complexity methodology executed for Truman and Marshall, 30 paragraphs were randomly sampled from all of the speeches that the American Military Governor of Berlin gave during the time period between 20 March - 23 June, 1948, and scored for integrative complexity.<sup>132</sup>

In randomly sampling paragraphs from his speeches and statements made during the pre-crisis time period, between three expert integrative complexity coders, General Clay's mean integrative complexity score was found to be a 1.98 on a scale of 7 (see Figure 3).

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<sup>131</sup> Marshall, G.C. "Speech to the General Federation of Women's Club", Statements for public record, 28 May, 1948.

<sup>132</sup> See Appendix A for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.



**Figure 3 - General Clay's average IC scores from pre-crisis to the beginning of crisis** <sup>133</sup>

Clay's pre-crisis cognitive complexity in leadership deliberation and decision making was found to be between very low and low. This reading serves as Clay's baseline measurement for decision making conditions of pressure and tension at normal operational levels. As General Clay became increasingly worried about the Russian threat during pre-crisis period, this reading will serve as Clay's baseline measurement for decision making conditions of stress and pressure at normal operational levels. Analysis of Clay's integrative complexity can be summarized by a typical passage that scored at an IC code of 2, or low integrative complexity that marks emergent rather than a fully developed differentiation of alternatives.

- **Score of 2** – Emergent differentiation of alternatives: "I think retaliatory measures would be very effective particularly in shipping. I have a Soviet ship loading in Bremen now and I am having great difficulty in finding fuel. However, if measures are not substantial, the effect can be bad. I would appreciate knowing if effective measures are found but would recommend withholding application until you have further word from us. Measures would be an ace in the hole to us if there are such."<sup>134</sup>

The crucial aspect of a score of 2 is the recognition of looking at the same issue in different ways or along different dimensions. However, differentiations at this level are emergent rather than fully developed. On average, Clay exhibited emergent alternatives during pre-crisis. In this passage for example, Clay discussed the effectiveness of retaliatory measures and highlighted conditions of use in which the outcome would change. The critical indicator for a score of 2 is the potential or conditional acceptance of different

<sup>133</sup> See Appendix A for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.

<sup>134</sup> Telegram from General Clay to General Omar Bradley, 01 April, 1948, *Clay Papers*.



perspectives or dimensions while the author may not explicitly develop the alternative dimension or perspective.

In this extract for example, Clay clearly stated his awareness of alternative futures based on the topic of retaliatory measures but did not explicitly expound on the degree of retaliatory measures considered substantial or the type of effects that insufficient retaliatory measures may have caused. Thus, these characteristics are sufficient evidence to merit a score of 2. In general, the Secretary of State recognized the potential of both military and diplomatic alternatives as options concerning the U.S. foreign policy solution to the developing situation in Berlin. Of note, during the pre-crisis period, Secretary of State Marshall considered outright military action against the Soviet Union to be a poor solution to the American problem.

#### BERLIN 1948, CRISIS PERIOD

The severance by the Soviet authorities of all land communications between Berlin and the Western zones on 24 June marked the beginning of the “crisis period”. This action created all three conditions necessary to meet the definition of crisis: a sharp rise in threat perception, an awareness of time constraints on decisions, and a higher probability of war. The period of crisis continued until 22 July, when the proposal for an armed convoy to break the blockade was rejected and the decision was taken to expand the airlift. As a result, time pressure declined in intensity, marking the beginning of a much longer post-crisis period.

The key decision makers during the Berlin crisis period remained the same as those of pre-crisis: President Truman, Secretary Marshall, and General Clay. During the crisis period, time constraints and the probability of war brought the President to the center of the policymaking arena. Continual indecision in Washington, however, left Clay considerable scope, which he fully utilized to influence the American response. As in the pre-crisis period, although a number of other decision makers participated in the decision process (namely Secretary of Defense James Forrestal, Secretary of the Army Kenneth Royall, Under Secretary of the Army William Draper, Under Secretary of State Robert Lovett, and the State Department’s representative in Germany, Robert Murphy), Truman, Marshall, and Clay were the core figures that decided the American response to the Soviet blockade.

As we have now developed a baseline understanding of the individual perspectives of key leadership and evaluated their routine psychological stress levels using cognitive complexity during pre-crisis, this section will evaluate cognitive complexity during the crisis period in a time phased approach. To facilitate this analysis, chosen American decision makers will first be examined in the beginning or acute phase of crisis and then again at the end or advanced phase of the crisis period. For the purposes of clarity in the conduct of analysis, the acute phase of crisis will be defined as the time period between 24-30 June, 1948, while the advanced phase of crisis will be identified as the time period between 15-22 July, 1948.

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## ANALYTICAL FRAME – QUESTION TWO

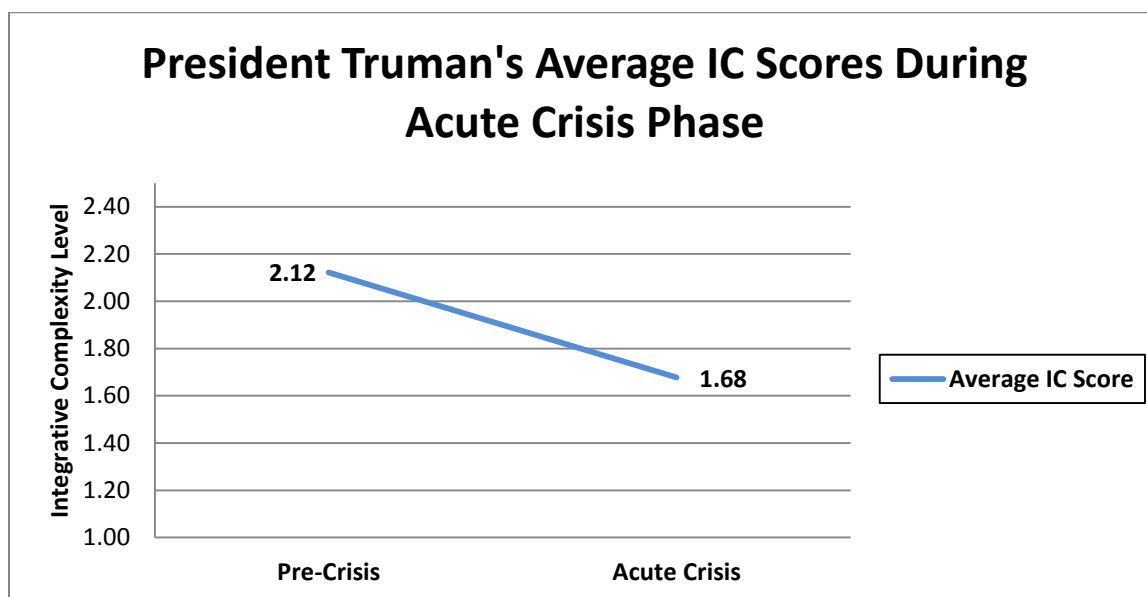
**2. Is cognitive processing complexity in leadership deliberation and decision making during the acute phase of crisis considered to be low, moderate, or high? (The measurement of cognitive complexity during the acute stage of crisis can be comparatively analyzed in relationship to pre-crisis cognitive complexity levels for the purposes of evaluating change.)**

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### INTEGRATIVE COMPLEXITY SCORING OF PRESIDENT TRUMAN IN ACUTE CRISIS

Returning to the study of Truman's cognitive complexity, 30 additional paragraphs were randomly selected from the speeches and statements that the American President made during the acute phase of the crisis period, the time between 24-30 June, 1948, and scored for integrative complexity.<sup>135</sup>

In the random sampling of paragraphs from the statements that the President made during acute crisis, between three expert integrative complexity coders, President Truman's mean integrative complexity score was found to be a 1.68 on a scale of 7. The measure of Truman's cognitive complexity during acute crisis in leadership deliberation and decision making was found to be between very low and low. When compared with the President's baseline measurement of decision making conditions of pressure and tension at normal operational levels, in acute crisis, Truman's integrative complexity declined from 2.12 to 1.68 (see Figure 4).



**Figure 4 - President Truman's decrease in IC scores during acute crisis**<sup>136</sup>

<sup>135</sup> See Appendix A for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.

At the onset of acute crisis, President Truman's stress levels increased dramatically and contributed to a marked decline in complexity when compared to the President's decision making conditions of pressure, stress, and tension at normal operational levels. Interestingly, although Truman was normally eloquent and verbose at routine complexity levels, with the rapid rise in pressure his statements generally became much shorter in length and were characterized by clipped sentences. The following example of Truman's curtailed expression when briefed that the Soviets were trying to force the Americans out of Germany, illustrates limited verbal expansion.

- **Score of 1** – Single, undifferentiated perspective: "There will be no discussion on that point. We are going to stay, period!"<sup>137</sup>

Broad analysis of Truman's integrative complexity can be summarized by a typical passage that scored at an IC code of 2, or low integrative complexity that marks emergent rather than a fully developed differentiation of alternatives.

- **Score of 2** - Emergent differentiation of alternatives: "We will have to deal with the situation as it develops. There cannot be a decision now other than that we are in Berlin by terms of an agreement. The Russians have no right to get us out by either direct or indirect pressure."<sup>138</sup>

The crucial aspect of a score of 2 is the recognition of looking at the same issue in different ways or along different dimensions. However, differentiation at this level is emergent rather than fully developed. The critical indicator for a score of 2 is the potential or conditional acceptance of different perspectives or dimensions while the author may not explicitly develop the alternative dimension or perspective. Although Truman sometimes differentiated subjects or stimuli under normal operating conditions during pre-crisis, in the context of acute crisis, the President's degraded complexity suggested increasingly implied alternative futures based on developing situations.

In this passage for example, Truman discussed the Berlin situation and the problems associated with a firm decision. While Truman clearly stated his awareness of alternative futures based on the developing situation, he did not explicitly expound on any courses of action or distinguish between types of Soviet pressure. Thus, these characteristics are sufficient evidence to assign a score of 2. While Kennedy's pre-crisis statements were typically characteristic of emergent differentiation of stimuli under normal operating conditions, in

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<sup>136</sup> See Appendix A for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.

<sup>137</sup> President Harry S. Truman, "Response when briefed on situation in Berlin", Presidential Cabinet Meeting, 28 June, 1948. President's Secretary's Files, Truman Library.

<sup>138</sup> Truman, H.S., *Presidential Cabinet Meeting*, President's Secretary's Files, 28 June, 1948.

acute crisis, the President recognized emerging dimensions of options with reduced frequency. Other example paragraphs that exhibit President Truman's emergent differentiation of alternatives during the acute crisis phase are the following extracts:

- **Score of 2** – Emergent differentiation of alternatives: "As part of the European recovery program, the participating countries have agreed to work together to lower barriers to trade. The United States can surely do no less than show its determination to support the same principle, which is so important to an expansion of world markets and world trade."<sup>139</sup>
- **Score of 2** – Emergent differentiation of alternatives: "The way is now open to the development of an ever-ready Reserve as an integral part of the United States Armed Forces. To achieve this end is the responsibility of the civilian heads of the national defense agencies. But in a deeper sense the responsibility rests on the officers and enlisted men of the Regular Armed Forces and their counterparts in the Reserve forces of each service."<sup>140</sup>
- **Score of 2** – Emergent differentiation of alternatives: "It is a close question whether this bill is better or worse than no bill at all. After careful consideration I have decided, however, that it would not be right to penalize the beneficiaries of this bill on account of the injustices perpetrated against others who should have been included within its provisions. I have therefore signed the bill in the hope that its injustices will be rectified by the Congress at the first opportunity."<sup>141</sup>

#### INTEGRATIVE COMPLEXITY SCORING OF SECRETARY MARSHALL IN ACUTE CRISIS

Returning to the study of Secretary Marshall and his cognitive complexity, at the onset of crisis, 30 additional paragraphs were randomly selected from selected speeches and statements that the Secretary of State made during the time period between 24-30 June, 1948, and coded for integrative complexity.<sup>142</sup>

During the time period of acute crisis, Secretary Marshall's mean integrative complexity score was found to be a 1.64 on a scale of 7. The measure of Marshall's cognitive complexity during acute crisis in leadership deliberation and decision making was found to be between very low and low. When compared with the Secretary's baseline measurement of decision making conditions of pressure and tension at normal operational levels, in acute crisis, Marshall's integrative complexity declined from 2.14 to 1.64 (see Figure 4).

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<sup>139</sup> Truman, H.S., Statement by the President upon signing the Trade Agreements Extension Act, 28 June, 1948.

<sup>140</sup> Truman, H.S., Statement by the President upon signing bill providing retirement benefits for members of the Armed Forces Reserves, 29 June, 1948.

<sup>141</sup> Truman, H.S., Statement by the President upon signing the Displaced Persons Act, 26 June, 1948.

<sup>142</sup> See Appendix A for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.

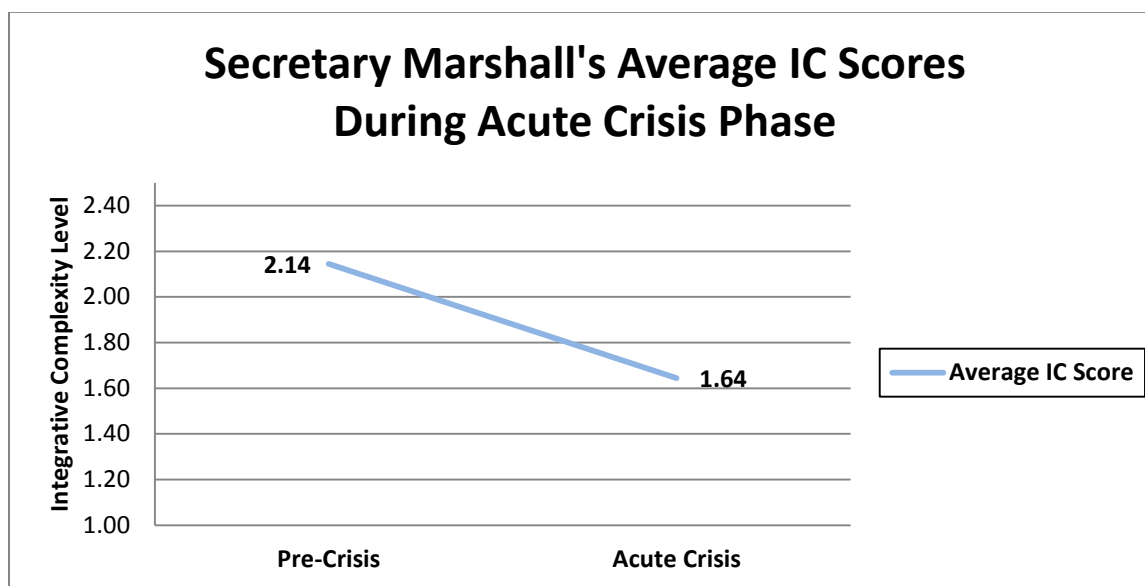


Figure 5 - Secretary Marshall's decrease in IC scores during acute crisis <sup>143</sup>

As acute crisis set in, Secretary Marshall's stress levels increased dramatically and contributed to a distinct decline in complexity when compared to his decision making conditions at normal operational levels. Much like President Truman, Marshall was normally descriptively detailed at routine complexity levels, but with the rapid rise of stressful decision conditions, his statements generally became increasingly brief. The following example illustrates Marshall's curtailed response after being briefed on Soviet actions in Berlin.

- **Score of 1** – Single undifferentiated perspective: “The recklessness of the Soviet leaders is that which is bred by despair. Their heads are full of bubbles! We intend to stay in Berlin and will meet force with force.”<sup>144</sup>

Summary analysis of Marshall's integrative complexity can be summarized by a typical passage that scored at an IC code of 2, or low integrative complexity that marks emergent rather than fully developed differentiation of alternatives.

- **Score of 2** – Emergent differentiation of alternatives: “The presence in Berlin of the western powers has become a symbol of our resistance to Soviet expansionism. We have two options at this juncture. We can stay in Berlin or see the failure of the European policy.”<sup>145</sup>

<sup>143</sup> See Appendix A for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.

<sup>144</sup> Marshall, G.C., “Marshall to Lovett, 25 June, 1948”, Department of State Summary of Telegrams to Germany, Office of the U.S. Secretary of State, 25 June, 1948.

<sup>145</sup> Marshall, G.C., Department of State Summary of Telegrams to Germany, Office of the U.S. Secretary of State, 28 June, 1948.

The crucial aspect of a score of 2 is the recognition of looking at the same issue in different ways or along different dimensions, but differentiations at this level are emergent rather than fully developed. The critical indicator for a score of 2 is the potential or conditional acceptance of different perspectives or dimensions while the author may not explicitly develop the alternative dimension or perspective. Although Marshall sometimes differentiated subjects under normal pre-crisis operating conditions, in acute crisis, Marshall's degraded complexity frequently suggested only implicit awareness of alternative futures based on the developing situation.

In this passage for example, Marshall discussed the Berlin situation and the basis of making a strategic choice to ensure the execution of what he perceived to be a successful policy. Even so, the Secretary did not explicitly identify courses of action or see shades of grey in the range of options available to the Americans that could lead to a successful foreign policy. Thus, these characteristics are sufficient evidence to assign a score of 2. As Marshall's statements were typically characteristic of emergent differentiation of stimuli under normal operating conditions during pre-crisis, in acute crisis, much like President Truman, the U.S. Secretary of State generally recognized only emerging dimensions of alternatives and did so with decreased frequency.

#### INTEGRATIVE COMPLEXITY SCORING OF GENERAL CLAY IN ACUTE CRISIS

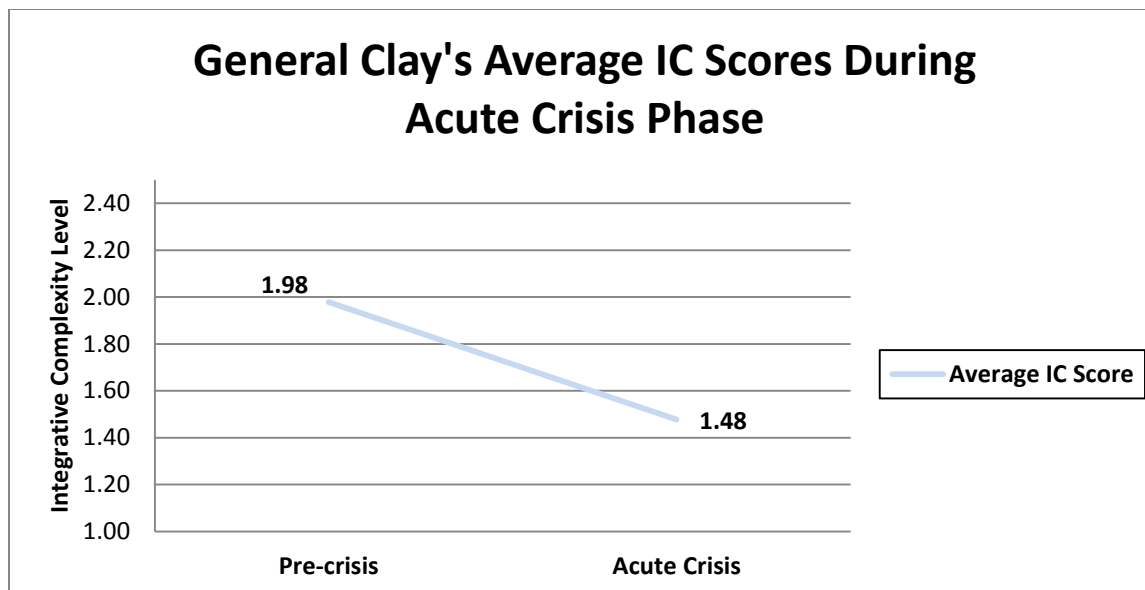
Returning to the study of Clay's cognitive complexity, 30 additional paragraphs were randomly selected from all of the speeches that the American Military Governor gave during the time period between 24-30 June, 1948, and scored for integrative complexity.<sup>146</sup>

In the random sampling of paragraphs from the statements that Clay made during the time period of acute crisis, between three expert integrative complexity coders, General Clay's mean integrative complexity score was found to be 1.48 on a scale of 7.<sup>147</sup> Clay's acute crisis cognitive complexity in leadership deliberation and decision making was found to be between low and very low. When compared with the Military Governor of Berlin's baseline measurement of decision making conditions of pressure and tension at normal operational levels, in acute crisis, Clay's integrative complexity declined from 1.98 to 1.48 (see Figure 6).

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<sup>146</sup> See Appendix A for comprehensive integrative complexity coding.

<sup>147</sup> See Appendix A.



**Figure 6 - General Clay's decrease in IC scores during acute crisis** <sup>148</sup>

At the onset of acute crisis, General Clay's stress levels increased dramatically and contributed to a distinct decline in complexity when compared to his decision making conditions at normal operational levels. Clay, who was routinely exacting and curtailed in prose, became increasingly succinct in parallel with the rapid rise of stressful decision conditions.

- **Score of 1** – Single, undifferentiated perspective: "We have got to do something. The world is facing the most critical issue since Hitler embarked upon his policy of aggression!"<sup>149</sup>

Broad analysis of Clay's integrative complexity can be summarized by a typical passage that scored at an IC code of 1, or very low integrative complexity characterized by a lack of development or differentiation of alternatives. He rarely expounded on exceedingly short statements during acute crisis, even when given the opportunity.

- **Score of 1** – Single, undifferentiated perspective: "The Russians are trying to put on the final pressure. They cannot drive us out by an action short of war as far as we are concerned."<sup>150</sup>

The crucial aspect of a score of 1 is the reliance, without qualification, on a simple, one dimensional rule for interpreting events or making choices. As such, only one way of looking at the world is considered legitimate with little or no room for ambiguity or shades of grey. The critical indicator for a score of 1 is the lack of

<sup>148</sup> See Appendix A for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.

<sup>149</sup> General Clay's description of the 24 June Soviet military action to Washington, 24 June, 1948, *Clay Papers*, Vol. 2, 568.

<sup>150</sup> General Clay's advice to Washington regarding the situation in Berlin, 27 June, 1948, *Clay Papers*, Vol. 2, 568.

evidence of different perspectives or dimensions while the author maintains only one perspective of the situation. Although Clay's statements were typically characteristic of emergent differentiation of stimuli under normal operating conditions, in acute crisis, Clay generally failed to recognize emerging dimensions and limited his expanding communication to a single perspective.

In this short passage for example, Clay described Soviet behavior in the Berlin situation in an effort to define an operational choice to execute what he saw as successful American policy in Berlin, but he failed to describe more than one viewpoint. Thus, this characteristic is sufficient to merit a score of 1. In general as pre-crisis gave way to acute crisis, the U.S. Military Governor increasingly recognized courses of military action as acceptable alternatives to the U.S. foreign policy crisis in Berlin.

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## **ANALYTICAL FRAME – QUESTION TWO**

**2. Is cognitive processing complexity in leadership deliberation and decision making during the advanced phase of crisis considered to be low, moderate, or high? (The measurement of cognitive complexity during the advanced stage of crisis can be comparatively analyzed in relationship to pre-crisis and acute crisis cognitive complexity levels for the purposes of evaluating change.)**

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### **INTEGRATIVE COMPLEXITY SCORING OF PRESIDENT TRUMAN IN ADVANCED CRISIS**

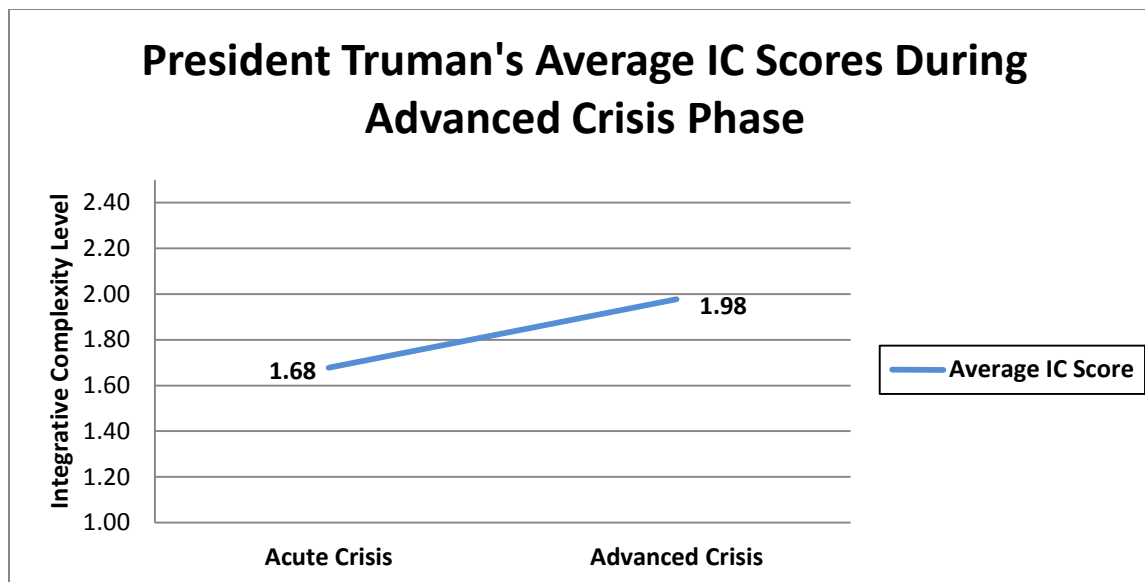
Returning to the study of Truman's cognitive complexity, 30 additional paragraphs were randomly selected from the speeches and statements that the American President made during the advanced phase of the crisis period, the time between 15-22 July, 1948. These passages were scored for integrative complexity.<sup>151</sup>

In the random sampling of paragraphs from the statements that the President made during the advanced phase of crisis, between three expert integrative complexity coders, President Truman's mean integrative complexity score was found to be a 1.98 on a scale of 7. Although the measure of Truman's cognitive complexity during advanced crisis in leadership deliberation and decision making was found to remain between low and very low, when compared with the President's integrative complexity measurement during acute crisis, Truman's integrative complexity was found to have increased from 1.68 to 1.98 (see Figure 7).

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<sup>151</sup> See Appendix A for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.





**Figure 7 - President Truman's increase in IC scores between acute and advanced crisis phases** <sup>152</sup>

During the advanced crisis phase, President Truman's stress levels declined for various reasons and contributed to a notable increase in complexity when compared to the President's decision making conditions of pressure and tension at the levels measured during acute crisis. Analysis of Truman's integrative complexity can be summarized by a typical passage that scored at an IC code of 2 (the closest whole number score to his scoring of 1.98), or low integrative complexity that is marked by an emergent differentiation of alternatives.

- **Score of 2** – Differentiated alternatives: "I don't think we ought to use nuclear weapons unless we absolutely have to. It is a terrible thing to order the use of something that is so terribly destructive, destructive beyond anything we have ever had. You have got to understand that this isn't a military weapon. It used to wipe out women and children and unarmed people, and not for military uses. So we have got to treat this differently from rifles and cannon and ordinary things like that. You have got to understand that I have got to think about the effect of such a thing on international relations. This is no time to be juggling an atom bomb around."<sup>153</sup>

The crucial aspect of a score of 2 is the recognition of looking at the same issue along different dimensions but differentiations at this level are emergent and not fully developed. In this passage for example, Truman discussed the tremendous tactical and operational effects that characterize nuclear weapons. The critical indicator for a score of 2, however, is the potential or conditional acceptance of different perspectives or

<sup>152</sup> See Appendix A for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.

<sup>153</sup> Statement by President Truman in response when asked about permissions to transfer granting authority for the use of atomic weapons, 21 July, 1948, Paragraph 7, *Truman Public Statements in 1948*, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, Independence, MO.

dimensions while the author may not explicitly develop the alternative dimension or perspective. In this example, the strategic applications of atomic weapons to international relations was only suggested but never developed by Truman, justifying a score of 2.

Even though Truman's IC scores were characterized by fewer emergent perspectives during the onset of acute crisis, as his complexity improved, in advanced crisis his performance increasingly captured the emergence of separate dimensions. Other example paragraphs that exhibit President Truman's emergent differentiation of alternatives during advanced crisis are as follows:

- **Score of 2** – Emergence of differentiated alternatives: "Secrecy is always distasteful to a free people. In scientific research, it is a handicap to productivity. But our need for security in an insecure world compels us, at the present time, to maintain a high order of secrecy in many of our atomic energy undertakings."<sup>154</sup>
- **Score of 2** – Emergence of differentiated alternatives: "Many people in the world must wonder how strongly we support the United Nations when we hesitate to assist the construction of its permanent home in this country. Legislation can and should be passed at once to authorize a loan by the United States Government to the United Nations, for the construction of its headquarters buildings in New York City."<sup>155</sup>
- **Score of 2** – Emergence of differentiated alternatives: "When the nations of the world are prepared to join with us in the international control of atomic energy, this requirement of secrecy will disappear. Our Government has sought, through its representatives on the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission, to find a common basis for understanding with the other member nations. However, the uncompromising refusal of the Soviet Union to participate in a workable control system has thus far obstructed progress."<sup>156</sup>

#### INTEGRATIVE COMPLEXITY SCORING OF SECRETARY MARSHALL IN ADVANCED CRISIS

Returning to the study of Marshall's cognitive complexity, 30 additional paragraphs were again randomly selected from the speeches and statements that the U.S. Secretary of State made during the advanced phase of the crisis period, the time between 15-22 July, 1948. These passages were scored for integrative complexity.<sup>157</sup>

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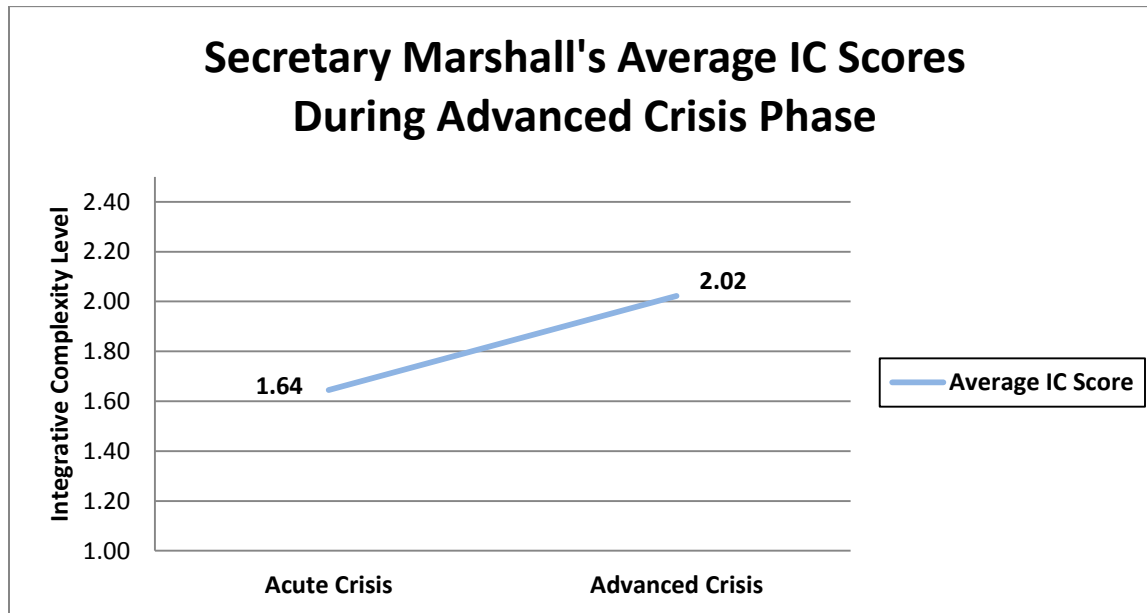
<sup>154</sup> Truman, H.S., Statement by the President reviewing two years of experience with the Atomic Energy Act, 24 July, 1948.

<sup>155</sup> Truman, H.S., Message to the Special Session of the 80th Congress, 27 July, 1948.

<sup>156</sup> Truman, H.S., Statement by the President reviewing two years of experience with the Atomic Energy Act, 24 July, 1948.

<sup>157</sup> See Appendix A for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.

In the random sampling of paragraphs from the statements that Marshall made during the advanced phase of crisis, between three expert integrative complexity coders, Secretary Marshall's mean integrative complexity score was found to be a 2.02 on a scale of 7.<sup>158</sup> The measure of Marshall's cognitive complexity during advanced crisis in leadership deliberation and decision making was found to be low, but when compared with the Secretary of State's integrative complexity measurement during acute crisis, Marshall's integrative complexity was found to have increased from 1.64 to 2.02 (see Figure 8).



**Figure 8 - Secretary Marshall's increase in IC scores between acute and advanced crisis phases** <sup>159</sup>

During the advanced crisis phase, Secretary Marshall's stress levels declined for myriad reasons and contributed to a notable increase in complexity when compared to the U.S. Secretary's decision making conditions of pressure and tension at the levels measured during acute crisis. Analysis of Marshall's integrative complexity can be summarized by a typical passage that scored at an IC code of 2 (the closest whole number score to his scoring of 2.02), or low integrative complexity that is characterized by an emergent differentiation of alternatives.

- **Score of 2** – Emergent differentiation of alternatives: "The single most important aspect of western Europe today is the development of the will to resist internal and external aggression. However, this determination can be weakened by events and maintaining and strengthening this will to resist is therefore fundamental to our policy. This should be

<sup>158</sup> See Appendix A for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.

<sup>159</sup> See Appendix A.

accomplished both through the effective implementation of the Economic Recovery Program and encouragement of the idea that we intend to help rebuild military defense against outside aggression.”<sup>160</sup>

The crucial aspect of a score of 2 is the recognition of looking at the same issue along different dimensions but differentiations are emergent rather than fully developed. In this passage, for example, Marshall developed the fundamental component of resisting aggression as part of U.S. policy. The critical factor for a score of 2 is the potential or conditional acceptance of different perspectives or dimensions while the author may not explicitly develop the alternative dimension or perspective.

While Marshall's IC performance in acute crisis was generally characterized by less frequent emergent alternatives, during advanced crisis, Marshall characterized the U.S. policy in parallel to other emerging dimensions; the Economic Recovery Program and rebuilding military defenses. Marshall demonstrated an emergent differentiation of alternatives, thus justifying a score of 2. While Marshall's IC performance in acute crisis was generally characterized by less frequent recognition of emergent alternatives, during advanced crisis, with increasing complexity the Defense Secretary characterized other emerging dimensions and tradeoffs as potential solutions to the U.S. foreign policy crisis in Berlin.

#### INTEGRATIVE COMPLEXITY SCORING OF GENERAL CLAY IN ADVANCED CRISIS

Returning to the study of General Clay's cognitive complexity, 30 additional paragraphs were again randomly selected from the speeches and statements that the U.S. Military Governor of Berlin made during the advanced phase of the crisis period, the time between 15-22 July, 1948. These passages were scored for integrative complexity.<sup>161</sup>

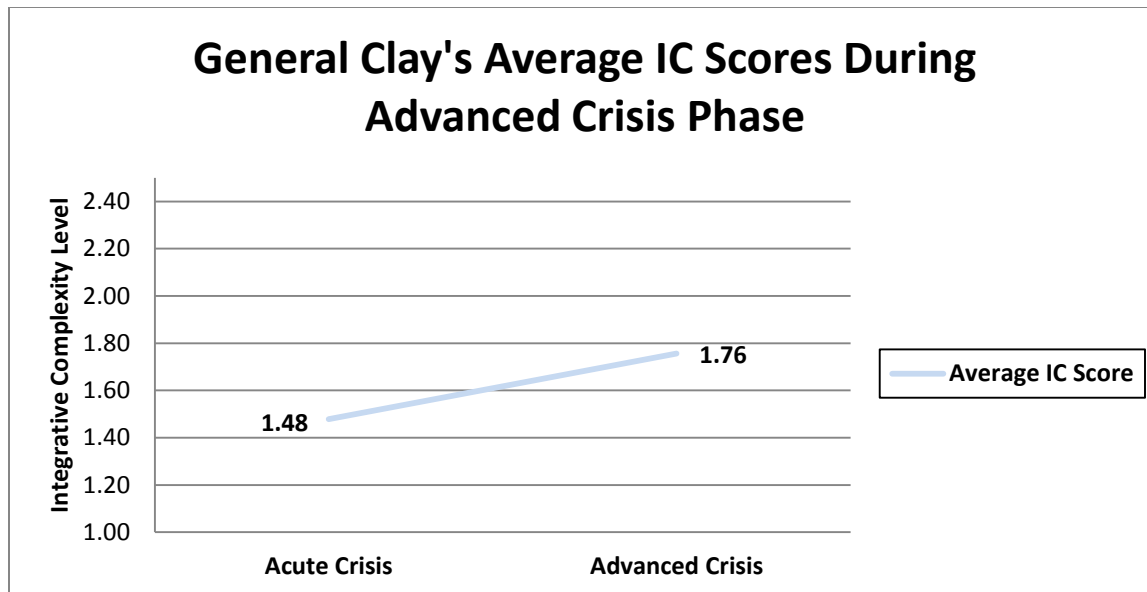
In the random sampling of paragraphs from the statements that Clay made during the advanced phase of crisis, between three expert integrative complexity coders, General Clay's mean integrative complexity score was found to be a 1.76 on a scale of 7.<sup>162</sup> The measure of Clay's cognitive complexity during advanced crisis in leadership deliberation and decision making was found to be between very low and low. When compared with his integrative complexity measurement during acute crisis, Clay's integrative complexity was found to have increased from 1.48 to 1.76 (see Figure 9).

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<sup>160</sup> Marshall, G.C., *Secretary of State Memorandum concerning U.S. Public Opinion on the Berlin Situation*, 29 July, 1948, George C. Marshall Foundation, Lexington, VA.

<sup>161</sup> See Appendix A for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.

<sup>162</sup> See Appendix A.



**Figure 9 - General Clay's increase in IC scores between acute and advanced crisis phases** <sup>163</sup>

During the advanced crisis phase, General Clay's stress levels declined and contributed to a slight increase in complexity when compared to the U.S. Military Governor's decision making conditions of pressure and tension at the levels measured during acute crisis. Clay's single dimension thinking was replaced by complexity characterized by emerging dimensions. Analysis of Clay's integrative complexity can be summarized by a typical passage that scored at an IC code of 2 (the closest whole number to his scoring of 1.76), or low integrative complexity that marks emergent rather than fully developed differentiation of alternatives.

- **Score of 2** – Emergent differentiation of alternatives: "The choice before us is a hard choice. However, if we do decide to retreat now, this retreat will not save us from again and again having to choose between retreat and war. With each retreat we find ourselves confronted with the same problem but with fewer and fewer allies on our side. Today we must make that choice." <sup>164</sup>

The crucial aspect of a score of 2 is the recognition of looking at the same issue in different ways but differentiations at this level are emergent rather than fully developed. In this passage for example, Clay discussed the difficulty of the decision against the Soviets in Berlin and his perception of the cumulative nature of problems associated with the decision to leave. The critical indicator for a score of 2 is the potential

<sup>163</sup> See Appendix A for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.

<sup>164</sup> Marshall, G.C., *Secretary of State Memorandum concerning U.S. Public Opinion on the Berlin Situation*, 29 July, 1948, George C. Marshall Foundation, Lexington, VA.

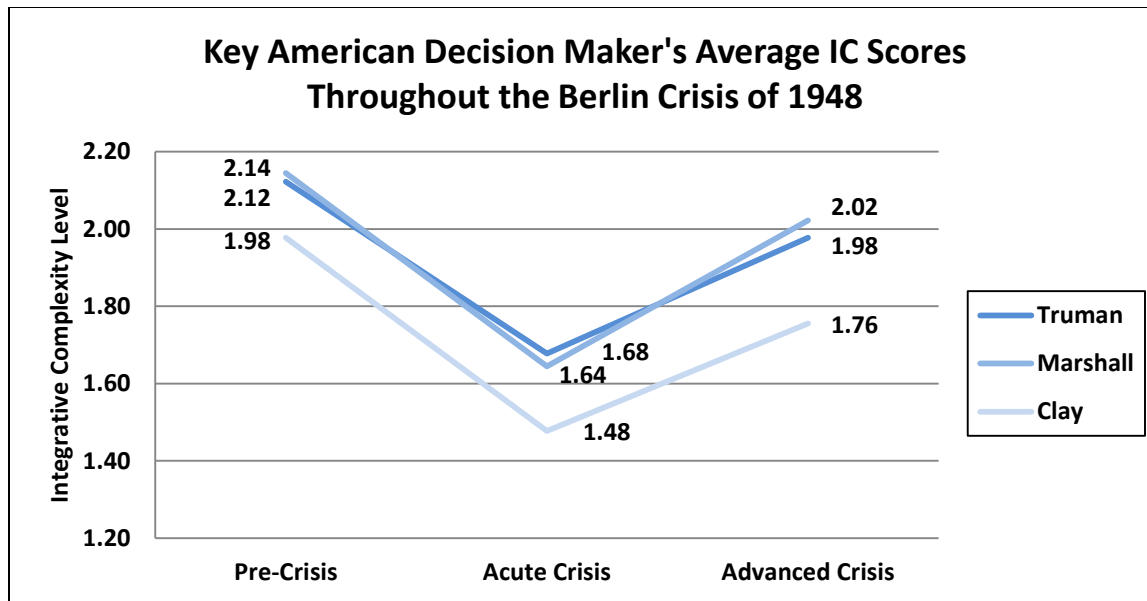
or conditional acceptance of different perspectives or dimensions while the author may not explicitly develop the alternative dimension or perspective.

Although Clay did not frequently demonstrate emergent differentiation of subjects during acute crisis, in the context of advanced crisis, the General clearly stated his awareness of alternative futures based on another available American option. Additionally, in this rare case Clay did not explicitly expand on the U.S. use of force. Thus, these characteristics are sufficient evidence to assign a score of 2. Although Clay demonstrated single dimension thinking during acute crisis, in the context of advanced crisis, the U.S. Military Governor became increasingly aware of alternative futures based on available American options that did not necessarily involve military action.

#### SUMMARY - INTEGRATIVE COMPLEXITY AS A MEASURE OF STRESS

In review of the project research questions that provide an analytic frame for this chapter, over the course of the Berlin blockade foreign policy crisis in 1948, all three key American leaders were found to experience significant changes in their integrative complexity scores throughout the crisis. First, integrative complexity measurements of President Truman, Secretary Marshall, and General Clay were obtained during normal operational conditions of the pre-crisis period. These measurements served as the integrative complexity baseline scores.

Second, integrative complexity measurements of all three U.S. decision makers were taken again during the acute phase of the crisis period. Without exception, integrative complexity scores taken during the acute crisis phase were significantly lower for the American leaders when compared to the integrative complexity baseline scores (see Figure 10).



**Figure 10 - Key American decision maker's average IC scores over the course of the Berlin crisis.<sup>165</sup>**

These case findings during acute crisis highlight the correlation between stress and integrative complexity; in general, an increase in stress can be linked with a decline in integrative complexity performance. The acute crisis phase of the 1948 Berlin crisis contributed to the rise of significant stress for American decision makers.

Next, as the crisis progressed, integrative complexity measurements of the key leaders were taken again during the advanced phase of the crisis period. Integrative complexity scores taken during the advanced phase of the crisis period were higher for the American leaders when compared to the scores taken during the acute crisis phase of the crisis period. Analysis found that over the duration of the crisis period, all of the leaders experienced increases in their integrative complexity scores (see Figure 10).

These findings reinforce the correlation between stress and integrative complexity; in general, a decline in stress can be associated with an increase in integrative complexity performance. The advanced crisis phase of the 1948 Berlin crisis contributed to decline in conditions of stress for the American decision makers.

Fourth, while the integrative complexity scores of the key American leaders during crisis never returned to their integrative complexity baseline scores, their performance indicated that as the crisis period progressed, they were all able to regain a portion of their integrative complexity baseline abilities versus the scores that were measured during the most stressful conditions of the crisis period (see Figure 10). The case findings

<sup>165</sup> See Appendix A for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.

demonstrate that the element of stress was persistent throughout the crisis period as integrative complexity performance of the key policy makers never returned to normal operational levels.

Finally, the results of this case successfully demonstrate the links between decision conditions of stress and policy maker integrative complexity. In summary, an increase in stress can be associated with a decline in policy maker integrative complexity. Conversely, a decline in stress can be associated with an increase in integrative complexity performance. Taking these findings into consideration, cognitive complexity is a sufficient independent measure of stress with which research scientists can accurately measure foreign policy decision conditions.



## CHAPTER 4 – CASE ONE FINDINGS

### CASE ONE: THE 1948 BERLIN CRISIS - INTEGRATIVE COMPLEXITY CONSEQUENCES FOR DECISION MAKING

The main purpose of this chapter is to continue the psychological analysis of major American policymakers who found themselves under conditions of increasing pressure during the Berlin crisis in 1948. Investigation will focus on assessing the relationship between higher stress levels, integrative complexity, and leadership decision making performance. This case will serve as a forum for specifically evaluating the crisis decision making behavioral pathologies that Janis and Mann's model specifies in the context of the Berlin blockade, serving to highlight the links between decision related stress, cognitive complexity, and behavioral responses that led to a peaceful resolution of the foreign policy crisis.

#### BERLIN 1948, PRE-CRISIS PERIOD

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#### ANALYTICAL FRAME – QUESTION THREE

**3. Based on the measured levels of cognitive complexity over the course of foreign policy crisis, what types of behavioral responses are observed specific to the Janis and Mann crisis model of decision making? (This section will demonstrate the links across complexity, stress, and behavior.)**

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#### PRESIDENT TRUMAN FINDINGS DURING PRE-CRISIS

As President of the United States, Truman's role in American foreign policy and national security fields was that of "final decision maker".<sup>166</sup> Truman's involvement in the actual decision making process was central during the crisis that brought a significant rise in the perception of threat and also the probability of war. Throughout the Berlin crisis, Truman took some crucial decisions on his own initiative, personally participated in the formulation of others, approved lesser ones, and by his own insistence retained ultimate responsibility for the policies and conduct of his Administration.<sup>167</sup>

From a motivational account, the American President's perspective of the Soviet Union during the pre-crisis time period was preoccupied almost singularly with "the threat of Russian totalitarianism."<sup>168</sup> This was Truman's key concern that in no small measure shaped his entire outlook on international relations in 1948

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<sup>166</sup> Hilsman, R. *The Politics of Policy-Making in Defense and Foreign Affairs* (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), 18.

<sup>167</sup> Shlaim, A. *The United States and the Berlin Blockade, 1948-1949* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983), 69.

<sup>168</sup> Truman, H.S., *Memoirs, Vol. 2: Years of Trial and Hope, 1946-1953*, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1956), 106-107.

and drove much of his subsequent foreign policy behavior. “A President has little time to meditate,” Truman wrote in a 1947 diary entry, “but whenever such moments occur, I turn my thoughts to the Soviet problem that confronts our nation so that I may decide what to do.”<sup>169</sup> Prior to the initiation of the Cold War, Truman’s motivations were based in part on an important goal that was anti-communist in nature.

Truman’s unique pre-crisis perspective held that the Soviet Union did not share the Western commitment to world order and that certain elements around Stalin misinterpreted the American desire to cooperate on the future of Europe as an indication of weakness. To Truman, the Soviet Union represented a threat to basic American values and around this motivation, the strategic goal of countering Soviet expansion began to form. As early as 1945, on numerous occasions Truman stated that while he intended to be firm but fair, he was not afraid of countering the Russians, resolving to “make no concessions from American principles or traditions in order to win their favor.”<sup>170</sup> A personal encounter with Stalin, at the 1945 Potsdam Conference, reinforced Truman’s beliefs that diplomatic protests were not enough to dissuade the Russians from the notion that they could continue on an expansionist course and would have to eventually be challenged by the United States. In March 1948, Truman declared, “Unless Russia is faced with an iron fist, another war is in the making. Only one language do they understand – ‘How many divisions have you?’ I do not think we should play compromise any longer.”<sup>171</sup>

During the pre-crisis period, Truman’s view of the Soviet Union as the “world’s problem” only grew more intense as stress levels began to increase. Truman’s motivational perspective was beset with worry and he seldom tempered his concerns with alternative thinking. The U.S. President never exhibited any signs of empathy for the estranged ally and did not appear to be capable of seeing Russian demands and actions in Germany, Eastern Europe, and in the Balkans from the perspective of Russian anxieties about Moscow’s own security. To Truman, the suggestion that any of these neighboring countries, a resurgent Germany, or the United States could threaten Russia in any way was inconceivable. Gradually, the actions of the adversary appeared to become more hostile toward the U.S. and specifically for the President, “the greed, aggressiveness, and ruthless expansionism that characterizes Russia’s conduct abroad is simply an extension of the despotism and brutality which it practices at home.”<sup>172</sup> Truman was quite clear of the importance in his own mind of the threat to American values; that the spread of Soviet rule was undermining the foundations of international peace and hence the security of the United States.<sup>173</sup>

Truman’s emphasis on the dictatorial nature of the Soviet regime, along with the adversarial threat it posed to U.S. security, became significantly prominent in his mind prior to Russia’s imposition of the blockade.

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<sup>169</sup> Truman, *Memoirs*, Vol. 2, 106-107.

<sup>170</sup> Truman, H.S., *Memoirs*, Vol. 1: *Years of Decisions, 1945*, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1955), 492.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, 492-493.

<sup>172</sup> Truman, *Memoirs*, Vol. 2, 106.

<sup>173</sup> Condit, K.W., *The History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*, Vol. 2: 1947-1949, (Washington, D.C.: Historical Division, Joint Secretariat, Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1976). Record Group, 218, Records of the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff, The National Archives.

Truman routinely suggested parallels with other adversaries from recent American history that involved not only significant foreign policy crisis, but major conflict. "We have fought hard," wrote Truman, "to crush the totalitarianism of Hitler, the insolence of Mussolini, and the arrogance of the warlords of Japan. Yet the new menace facing us seems every bit as grave as Nazi Germany and her allies have been."<sup>174</sup> The importance of the Soviet threat from Truman's perspective continued to grow in significance before the blockade. At the beginning of the pre-crisis period in a letter to his daughter, dated March, 1948, Truman was even more explicit and polarized in the distaste he felt towards the Soviet regime. "Many agreements were made at Potsdam," he wrote, "agreements for the government of Germany, not one of which has Russia kept. So that now we are faced with exactly the same situation with which Britain and France were faced in 1938-1939 with Hitler. A totalitarian state is no different whether you call it Nazi, Fascist, Communist, or Franco Spain. A decision will have to be made. I am going to make it. We may have to fight for it. The oligarchy in Russia is no different from the Czars, Louis XIV, Napoleon, Charles I and Cromwell. It is a Frankenstein dictatorship worse than any of the others, Hitler included."<sup>175</sup>

Over time, Truman's obsessive motivational account in firm opposition to the Soviets steadily became his main foreign policy objective and one of the most important goals of his Administration. Few in the Truman Administration could have perceived the conflict between the free world and the Communist super power as intensely as the U.S. President did. This binary perspective completely dominated Truman's worldview. He came to see relations between the two sides not as ordinary political rivalry but as an ideological confrontation between two ways of life. This classic example of the Cold War perspective of international politics as a global contest between democracy and totalitarianism formed the basis of the eventual "Truman Doctrine". The President's address to Congress during the pre-crisis period highlights his polarized perspective:

"At the present moment in world history nearly every nation must choose between alternative ways of life. The choice is too often not a free one. One way of life depends upon the will of the majority, and is distinguished by free institutions, representative government, free elections, guarantees of individual liberty, freedom of speech and religion, and freedom from political oppression. The second way of life is based upon the will of the minority forcibly imposed upon the majority. It relies on terror and oppression, a controlled press and radio, fixed elections, and the suppression of personal freedoms."<sup>176</sup>

Truman's statement conveyed his dominant perspective of world politics as a deadly contest between two ideologically irreconcilable adversaries. It also reflected his conclusion that in dealing with the Soviet Union,

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<sup>174</sup> Truman, *Memoirs*, Vol. 2, 107.

<sup>175</sup> Truman, Margaret. *Harry S. Truman*, (New York: William Morrow), 1973.

<sup>176</sup> *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Harry S. Truman, 1947-1948*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1963), 178-179.

action was the most important instrument and proposed the Truman strategy to govern American policy toward the Soviet Union that would become the U.S. platform during the Cold War: containment. This became the most important long term strategic objectives for Truman's administration and as time went on, it became a goal that would define his legacy.

Nonetheless, throughout the pre-crisis period Truman clearly perceived the Soviet Union as a rising threat and it corresponded with his psychological stress levels. As the pre-crisis period drew closer to crisis, President Truman's stress levels gradually increased. Although the Truman Administration was extremely vocal in their anti-Communist rhetoric during pre-crisis, decision makers in Washington seemed surprised when the Soviets made their military move. All things considered, the Berlin blockade did not rise upon the Truman Administration suddenly or unexpectedly. Even though a varied and growing volume of information reached Washington that persistently pointed in the direction of an imminent breakdown of relations between the Allies and Soviets, with accompanying stress it was American decision making behavior that became problematic.

Strategic warning of Soviet intentions to act in Germany was amplified in time by a more precise operational warning highlighting Berlin as the target for Soviet pressure against Western powers. As early as October 1947, from his headquarters in Germany General Clay and his political advisor warned the National Security Council that the United States must be prepared for Soviet action designed to force the withdrawal of the Western powers from Berlin.<sup>177</sup> In numerous memorandums to the President in late 1947, the Central Intelligence Agency also estimated that increasingly negative diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union "could cause the USSR to undertake a program of intensified obstructionism and calculated insult in an effort to force the U.S. and other Western powers to withdraw from Berlin."<sup>178</sup> Clay again amplified the first warning by sending another telegram to Washington on 5 March, stating that war might come with "dramatic suddenness."<sup>179</sup>

The incoming information warning of potential Russian military action naturally presented a direct threat to the U.S. foreign policy of sustaining force presence in Berlin for the Truman Administration. As Truman had surrounded himself with staunch anti-Soviet policy makers at both positions of Secretary of State and Secretary of Defense, as stress began to rise during pre-crisis, these authorities demonstrated Janis and Mann's dysfunctional behavior of defensive avoidance by downplaying an overt Soviet threat to support chosen American policies. Additionally, President Truman, merely by making his expectations and

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<sup>177</sup> Clay, L.D. *Decision in Germany*, (New York: Doubleday, 1950), 239.

<sup>178</sup> Memorandum for the President from Admiral R.H. Hillenkoetter, 22 December, 1947, file 123, Admiral William D. Leahy files, Record Group (RG) 319, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

<sup>179</sup> Clay to Lieutenant General Stephen J. Chamberlain, Director of Intelligence, Army General Staff, 5 March, 1948, edited by J.E. Smith, *The Papers of General Lucius D. Clay: Germany 1945-1949*, Vol. II (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1974), 568.

preferences known, indirectly encouraged his subordinates to report or emphasize information supportive of his policies and to avoid or discount information that ran counter to those expectations and preferences.

Not surprisingly, also in accordance with Janis and Mann's behavioral pathologies, the steady increase of information pertaining to potential Soviet military action in an environment of increasing stress caused continued defensive avoidance, or more precisely procrastination, as Truman's staff sorted through the increasing volume of reporting. After the first intelligence reports arrived in Washington indicating the potential of a Soviet imposed blockade of Berlin, delays in handling the information in Truman's staff began. Even after receiving numerous reports, Washington did not recommend that Truman attempt diplomatic engagement with the Soviet Union in an attempt to dissuade Moscow from imposing the blockade, nor did the Americans develop contingency plans for supporting the Allied position in Berlin should a Soviet blockade of western interests become a reality.<sup>180</sup> Procrastination among Washington policymakers on the feasibility and desirability of staying in Berlin prevented the Truman Administration from making any pre-crisis decisions.

In addition to the warnings, conflicting information reports presented by higher echelons of Army and State Department leadership caused confusion with negative indications that the Soviets would execute a military move.<sup>181</sup> Additionally, just over one month after his previous report on the potential for sudden war, on 10 April another report from Clay cast doubt on the possibility of the Soviet Union imposing a full blockade on Berlin. Clay believed the Russians would not take such an action because it would risk alienating the German population.<sup>182</sup> Then on 12 May, 1948, the Central Intelligence Agency again warned that "a further gradual tightening of Soviet restrictions on the position of the Western Powers in Berlin is to be anticipated", but over one month later on 17 June they reversed their claim, stating "there is increasing reason to believe that the Kremlin is also genuinely interested in exploring the possibility of easing the tension between the USSR and the West, for tactical purposes."<sup>183</sup> These conflicting information reporting trends continued over the duration of pre-crisis and were key to shaping American decision making behavior toward the specific dysfunctional patterns indicated by Janis and Mann.

Additionally, the American consultative circle during the pre-crisis period was confined to only the key decision-makers and their official advisors. No available evidence suggests that U.S. decision makers went outside the government to consult members of competing elites or interest groups. In March 1948, Truman actually turned down the idea that he should call into conference the majority and minority leaders of U.S. Congress because he wanted to preserve secrecy and avoid panic. Within the American government, the consultative process was institutional and only took place inside the State Department, the Department of the

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<sup>180</sup> George, A.L., Smoke, R. *Deterrence in American Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974), 130.

<sup>181</sup> Bohlen, C.E. *Witness to History, 1929-1969* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1973), 276.

<sup>182</sup> Bradley-Clay teleconference, TT-9341, 10 April, 1948, *Clay Papers*, II, 622.

<sup>183</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, "Review of the World Situation," 12 May, 1948; 17 June, 1948, Papers of Harry S. Truman, President's Secretary's File, Harry S. Truman Library, Independence, MO, Box 203, Folders "NSC Meeting No 11" and "NSC Meeting No 13."

Army, and between them both. Evidently, the Truman Administration purposely structured U.S. information communications networks and intelligence organizations to maximize control while minimizing external influence.<sup>184</sup>

Sufficient case material also exists to suggest that during pre-crisis, the officials of the Truman Administration demonstrated conformity to group decision making or the psychological phenomenon known as groupthink as decision conditions changed.<sup>185</sup> Janis and Mann use this term to describe the dynamics that occur within a group of individuals in which the desire for harmony or conformity in the group results in a dysfunctional decision making outcome.<sup>186</sup> The criteria of groupthink include a number of main symptoms that drive dysfunctional behavior to include illusions of invulnerability, faulty rationale, beliefs of inherent morality, holding particular stereotypes, application of group pressure, self-censorship, illusions of unanimity, and protection against adverse information.<sup>187</sup> Concerning illusions of invulnerability, in Washington the Truman Administration ignored repeated warnings of impending Soviet military activity in Berlin. When the Berlin issue arose in staff meetings, Truman's executive assistants avoided being too hard in their judgements of the American position in Berlin and made no attempt to lead a systematic search for all available options in light of increasing indications of Soviet military activity.<sup>188</sup> Despite clear warnings of danger, this led to a failure to prepare for the possibility of a Soviet military move.

Victims of groupthink also hold stereotyped views of the leaders of the opposing side.<sup>189</sup> As Truman led the way in this predominant thinking during pre-crisis, his Administration believed that Marshal Stalin and the Soviet Union were so evil that genuine attempts at negotiating differences with them were unwarranted. As previous evidence indicates, this sentiment was voiced frequently over the course of pre-crisis. Additionally, due to the application of group pressure, self-censorship, and unanimity, the Truman staff avoided deviating from group consensus on their prioritized agenda items; the Administration kept silent about any misgivings on not directly addressing the U.S. position in Berlin. This mindset attempted to minimize conflict and achieve consensus decisions on priorities without a critical evaluation of alternative viewpoints that would have entailed potential change. The Truman staff also protected the President and fellow Administration members from adverse information that may have broken the complacency that they shared about the effectiveness of their pre-crisis agenda. In this case, by isolating themselves from outside influences, the President's Administration indirectly suppressed dissenting viewpoints and avoided controversial issues along with the discussions that usually result in alternative solution development. These examples of

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<sup>184</sup> Lebow, R. N. *Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crisis*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), 114.

<sup>185</sup> Janis, I.L., *Victims of Groupthink: a Psychological Study of Foreign Policy Decisions and Fiascoes* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1972), 15.

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>187</sup> Janis, I.L., "Groupthink", *Psychology Today*, (Ziff-Davis Publishing Company, 1971), 85-88.

<sup>188</sup> Shlain, A. *The United States and the Berlin Blockade, 1948-1949* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983), 111.

<sup>189</sup> Janis, "Groupthink", 86.

groupthink highlight the Truman Administration's behavior that resulted in a loss of individual creativity, uniqueness, independent thinking, and led to degraded decision making.<sup>190</sup>

In the presence of conflicting information and insensitivities to new information that could have provided warning for needed change, the desire for cognitive consistency also caused policymaker delays in Washington. For example, in response to repeated warnings amid conflicting information from both General Clay and the CIA, the U.S. Army General Staff took months to officially respond with their thoughts because of confusion and general discord over reporting trends. Only in the beginning of June 1948, the same month as the beginning of the crisis did the General Staff complete a study titled "U.S. courses of action in event Soviets attempt to force U.S. out of Berlin".<sup>191</sup> The tendencies of groupthink and procrastination certainly apply to this illustration as well. Nonetheless, the staff recommended that in the event of the Soviet Union imposing "administrative difficulties", the United States policy should be to remain in Berlin while substantially enhancing the Allied force presence, which they admitted entailed a significant increase in risk. After the study was published however, the results were never forwarded to the National Security Council for decision to establish policy.

President Truman was never personally briefed on the results of the study and American intent to address the threat to U.S. interests and commitment to remain in the German capital was never officially established. Of the information available to the Truman Administration, a high volume of sources served to generate significant internal discussions pertaining to contingency planning and it resulted in the creation of a diverse assortment American response options. However, the content of this dialogue never made it to Truman due to other myriad requirements. Over time, of the copious amounts of information generated and consumed internal to the Truman Administration, only one central interpretation of Soviet behavior emerged in Washington. Across Truman's staff, the leading assessment was forwarded that Moscow "would intensify consolidation of eastern Germany and use its position in Berlin to check Allied plans in the west."<sup>192</sup> Due to competing interests however, Administration agenda items moved ahead of presenting decision information that knowingly incurred increased risk of conflict abroad and in many cases, decision intent was overcome by other events perceived to be more important as the pre-crisis period progressed. The President's staff had become comfortable maintaining the status quo in support of the Allied occupation of Germany. As this was consistent with the Truman Administration policy goals during election year of 1948, very few among the President's administration saw plausible reasons to force change or make decisions that were not immediately pressing.

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<sup>190</sup> Janis, *Victims of Groupthink: a Psychological Study of Foreign Policy Decisions and Fiascos*, 17.

<sup>191</sup> Shlaim, *The United States and the Berlin Blockade, 1948-1949*, 111.

<sup>192</sup> Memorandum for the President from Admiral R.H. Hillenkoetter, 16 March, 1948, President's Secretary File, Harry S. Truman Library, Independence, Missouri.

During the weeks prior to the Soviet blockade, Truman himself postponed decision making on policy in Berlin due to focusing his attention on more immediate tasks. Truman was pre-occupied with the U.S. Presidential elections in 1948, and prioritized other problems that he was dealing with given time constraints. To illustrate this point, as Truman was thinking about pending decisions related to foreign policy in Berlin, the U.S. President was also concentrating his efforts on the success of a domestic re-election tour through Nebraska, Idaho, Washington, and California, aimed at boosting his declining electoral prospects.<sup>193</sup> While the President's political speeches remained focused on supporting America's anti-Soviet campaign, the expression of clear intent did not prompt concrete formulation of American foreign policy decisions on Berlin. Clearly, competing requirements and time constraints caused Truman give emphasis elsewhere and take more time to make necessary policy decisions. Truman's specific issues, when combined with favored agenda items among the President's Administration, caused continuous delays in actually choosing what to do about a Soviet military move against American interests in Berlin. This process ended up consuming the entire duration of pre-crisis; for Truman particularly, it took an extreme sense of urgency after the initiation of acute crisis to prompt reprioritization of the Berlin issue so that a foreign policy decision could be reached.

Overall, along with measured levels of integrative complexity, the most noteworthy feature of Truman's behavior during the pre-crisis period was his lack of participation in a systematic search and evaluation of alternatives due to being task saturated with other prioritized requirements. In general, information was collected, processed, and consultations were held by his Administration, but the product of this preliminary work was not presented to Truman in a structured form that indicated the available options and likely consequences of each, calling on him to make a decision. Also, due to competing requirements, Truman himself did not actively promote analytic procedures for choice. The President tended to deal with each issue as it arose rather than make strategic choices based on long-term considerations.

During pre-crisis, a number of factors tended to inhibit careful analytical consideration of the Berlin problem causing decision delays in the highest echelons of the American government. First, there were other major problems that faced Truman, such as the recognition of Israel and the level of the military budget, which competed for the President's attention. Secondly, the start of the 1948 presidential campaign made fundamental political choices more difficult to reach for the Administration. Third, the conflicting information discussed of Soviet intentions further complicated the problem of clear choice throughout the leadership chain. Finally, in an environment of increasing stress, the defensive behavior of wishful thinking inclined the decision makers against facing up to the worst case scenarios and contingency options.

The fundamental question was what exactly should be done in the event of a complete blockade of Berlin. This question was never far below the surface of Truman's administration but this concern did not prompt

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<sup>193</sup> Donovan, R.J. *Conflict and Crisis: The Presidency of Harry S. Truman, 1945-1948*, (New York: W.W. Norton, 1977), 396-402.



him to embark on a comprehensive search of alternatives, and it certainly did not produce a firm and unequivocal commitment to stay in Berlin. The inability of the Administration to face up to the worst case scenario meant that it was caught unprepared when the full blockade was imposed by the Soviets in late June.

#### SECRETARY MARSHALL FINDINGS DURING PRE-CRISIS

Marshall's willing subordination to the U.S. President was a major factor in the making of American foreign policy. Being a former military officer, Marshall viewed his relationship to the President as that of a soldier to a commanding officer. His perspective of the Soviet Union tended to be strikingly similar to those of his superior. He held a deep respect for Truman and carefully avoided conducting an independent foreign policy.<sup>194</sup> The goals of the President became the objectives that were the most important for the American Secretary of State.

During the pre-crisis period in 1948, in parallel with the President, from a motivational account Secretary of State Marshall perceived an increase in the Soviet threat and his stress levels began to increase. More specifically, institutionally the State Department had become highly skeptical of the possibility of maintaining the post-war alliance with the Soviet Union, and had come to regard a break with the Soviet Union in Germany as practically inevitable. Viewing the Soviet Union as an aggressive and insatiable adversary, the State Department generally favored the consolidation of America's positioning in West Germany by enhancing America's military superiority and full use of economic advantages rather than by diplomatic concessions that they judged would only be misconstrued by the Soviets as a sign of western weakness. The State Department had two recommendations for Marshall as Secretary. The first was to formulate U.S. policy towards the Soviet Union on "a global, not a piecemeal basis since the threat posed by monolithic international communism is of worldwide dimensions."<sup>195</sup> The second recommendation was to increase America's military strength, because "we cannot effectively counter Soviet expansionist tendencies unless we maintain our armed forces at a level where they will command respect."<sup>196</sup> Unsurprisingly, Marshall took both of these suggestions as they mirrored the desires of the American President's policy toward Soviet containment.

Although Marshall's outlook on the Soviets led to policy accord with the President, the Secretary's motivational account of the Russians was very much that of the military planner concerned with the balance of forces and their readiness issues, rather than a focus on opposing philosophy and morals. More pragmatically, Marshall viewed the Cold War as a political conflict between two great powers whose outcome

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<sup>194</sup> Ferrell, R.H. *George C. Marshall* (New York: Cooper Square, 1966), 51.

<sup>195</sup> "Relations with the Soviet Union," memorandum for Secretary Marshall, 17 January, 1947, *Department of State papers, European Affairs File*, quoted in Yergin, *Shattered Peace*, 262-263.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*, 262-263.

would be determined by the underlying balance of military, economic, and psychological strength of the two sides.<sup>197</sup> Regardless, the Secretary's perception of the Soviets as a threat brought accompanying stress.

On the substance of policy and particularly on the need to strengthen America's armed forces, there was no disagreement in Washington. Much like the President, formulating a foreign policy to oppose the Russians became an all-consuming goal. Marshall needed no reminders from his State Department advisors to emphasize the importance of having a credible military posture in dealing with the Soviets. Marshall's pronounced weakness lay in the opposite direction of diplomacy as he had no talent or interest in negotiations. A lifetime in the military had accustomed him to giving orders and imposing distinct solutions, not engaging in the diplomatic arts of verbal persuasion, tactical maneuvering, haggling, and endgame compromise.<sup>198</sup>

By the pre-crisis period in 1948, considering Marshall's complexity levels, he seemed to have abandoned any notion that a diplomatic approach might be the solution cooperative relations with the Soviets, and he displayed neither flexibility nor patience in his direct dealings with their leaders. Marshall was not interested in compromise on behalf of the U.S. President, and since he could not force the Russians to accept cooperation on America's terms, he did not see the point of engaging in dialogue at all. The main conclusion that Marshall drew from face-to-face discussions with the Russians was that the U.S. needed to take urgent measures to return Western Europe to economic health in order to consolidate its resistance to Communism.<sup>199</sup> In this sense, Marshall's failed diplomatic relations with the Russians gave birth to the European Recovery Program, which was dubbed the "Marshall Plan" of action to counter Communism and the Soviets.

The implementation of the Marshall Plan created tension between East and West, and the foreign policy undoubtedly played a large role in making the Cold War a reality between America and the Soviet Union. Strategically, the European Recovery Program was successful in shifting the balance of power in favor of the West, as Marshall had anticipated. During the pre-crisis period in 1948, Marshall read a paper to the Cabinet on the international situation, concluding that "the advance of Communism has been stemmed and the Russians have been compelled to make a re-evaluation of their position." Marshall also stated that "the objective of our policy from this point on would be the restoration of the balance of power in both Europe and Asia and that all actions would be viewed in the light of this objective."<sup>200</sup> This was a significant statement, for it demonstrates that Marshall's perspective was almost perfectly aligned with those of the American President in formulating a global strategy towards the Soviet Union. Based on restoring the balance of power, this strategy was immediately endorsed by Truman's Cabinet. While the restoration of the balance of power was

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<sup>197</sup> Bohlen, C.E., *The Transformation of American Foreign Policy*, (New York: Norton, 1969), 87.

<sup>198</sup> Murphy, R., *Diplomat Among Warriors*, (London: Collins, 1964), 373-374.

<sup>199</sup> Ferrell, *George C. Marshall*, 54.

<sup>200</sup> Millis, W. ed., *The Forrestal Diaries*, (New York: Viking, 1951), 340-341.

accepted as the guiding objective of American policy, it also served to set the goals of the Administration that would drive key decision making behavior.

Although the blockade of Berlin was alarming to Marshall, it should not have been such a surprise. While it can be argued that Marshall's own foreign policy behavior in Germany contributed to the imposition of the Berlin blockade and an escalation of the Cold War, during pre-crisis, it was his initial perception of the Soviet Union as an expanding threat to the status quo that brought increasingly stressful decision conditions.<sup>201</sup> Much like President Truman, Marshall's anti-Communistic rhetoric was intense, yet there was a disconnection when it came to decisions on Allied military commitments in Germany.

During pre-crisis, Marshall's levels of stress slowly increased and corresponded with measured levels of integrative complexity. Incoming information warning of potential Russian military action throughout the pre-crisis period naturally presented a direct threat to the U.S. foreign policy of sustaining force presence in Berlin. According to Janis and Mann's dysfunctional behavior pattern of defensive avoidance, at the top of the State Department, Marshall took lead in discounting the repeated warnings and downplaying the overt Soviet threat to support chosen American policies of the President. He was also cognizant of the obtuse force ratio in favor of the Soviets. Although this stark reality bothered him at a fundamental level, he could do nothing about it so he procrastinated for time. Additionally, merely by knowing the President's preferences, as a former military officer he reported and emphasized only the information supportive of his superior's policies and avoided information that ran counter to those expectations and preferences. As pre-crisis reporting of the eventual blockade was clearly available from both General Clay and the CIA, Marshall used the psychological coping strategies of selective attention and denial to assist in dealing with information that presented a threat to chosen objectives of his Commander in Chief.

Much like Truman's staff, U.S. Department of State officers also had to sort through the tremendous volume of reporting. Delays in information processing were inevitable in the presence of significant information overload while the conflicting nature of the reports made the presentation of a clear picture even more difficult. Even after the reporting trends seemed to indicate that Soviet hostilities in the capital city of Germany were imminent, Marshall and the State Department did not attempt diplomatic engagement or develop concrete emergency negotiation options for the President.<sup>202</sup> Procrastination among Marshall and State Department staff prevented any crisis response options recommending speaking to Stalin personally to be forwarded to the U.S. President.

Additionally, at the State Department communication became focused more internally versus externally and new external information decreased. For example, Marshall's consultative circle during the pre-crisis period

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<sup>201</sup> Shlaim, *The United States and the Berlin Blockade, 1948-1949*, 96.

<sup>202</sup> George and Smoke, *Deterrence in American Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974), 130.

was restricted to only his State Department diplomats abroad and the U.S. Department of the Army in Washington. Under no circumstances did the U.S. Secretary of State venture outside of U.S. government channels to obtain advice from unaffiliated entities that had no competing interests. Within the State Department itself, the consultative process was purely institutional inside Washington. Evidence demonstrates that the State Department was also structured to maximize control of information while minimizing external influence outside its official channels abroad.<sup>203</sup> Regardless of the reasons, strategic communication warning was missed by Marshall and his organizational staff in Washington. Consequently, no formal U.S. foreign policy in Berlin was ever developed prior to the Soviet blockade. In the pre-crisis period, Marshall failed making recommendations to the President to minimize the stressful impact of foreign policy crisis on the American administration.

Adequate material also exists on Marshall's account to suggest that during pre-crisis, the officials of the State Department exhibited conformity to group decision making or the psychology of groupthink.<sup>204</sup> In Washington for example, the State Department collectively constructed faulty rationalizations to discount increased warnings of Soviet military activity that contributed to negligence in the development of a negotiating strategy for the U.S. President. Marshall also held stereotyped views of the Soviet leaders of the opposing side.<sup>205</sup> Marshall's dominant pre-crisis thinking held that genuine attempts at negotiating differences with the Soviets would be ineffective. Considering group pressure, self-censorship, and illusions of unanimity, similar to Truman's Administration, the State Department staff also tried to minimize conflict and reach consensus decisions without a critical evaluation of alternative perspectives. As the State Department isolated their discussions inside Washington from external influences, Marshall's staff also protected against adverse information by indirectly suppressing dissenting viewpoints and avoiding controversial issues along with potential alternative course of action development. As such, these examples highlight groupthink characteristics that resulted in a loss of novel, creative, and independent thinking that often produce successful solutions; the collective behavior dysfunction of the State Department, in this case, resulted in degraded decision making.<sup>206</sup>

#### GENERAL CLAY FINDINGS DURING PRE-CRISIS

The Military Governor of the U.S. zone of Germany, General Lucius Clay, had a decision making style was highly centralized and authoritarian. His self-assurance was firm, his decisiveness sharp, and he fought with passion and intensity for the causes in which he believed. This self-confidence, combined with a quick grasp of essential information, gave him an air of supreme authority. There were a large number of experts and advisors on his staff but there is not much evidence that he relied heavily on their advice. Even to his top

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<sup>203</sup> George and Smoke, *Deterrence in American Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice*, 131.

<sup>204</sup> Janis, *Victims of Groupthink: a Psychological Study of Foreign Policy Decisions and Fiascoes*, 15.

<sup>205</sup> Janis, "Groupthink", 86.

<sup>206</sup> Janis, *Victims of Groupthink: a Psychological Study of Foreign Policy Decisions and Fiascoes*, 17.

subordinates, he was reluctant to delegate more than routine duties. All important matters, and many others that were not, were handled personally by the U.S. Army General. He did not encourage the kind of staff work which one would normally expect from a military officer. He preferred to do his own work and reached decisions quickly, irreversibly, and alone. Once his mind was made up, there was hardly any changing it.<sup>207</sup>

In 1948, a policy vacuum in Washington provided context in which a strategically placed personality like Clay could effectively pursue his own views and ambitions in Germany. In theory, the State Department was supposed to develop American policy towards Germany, and the Army Department was supposed to carry it out. In practice, Clay found that it was difficult to find the source of authority in Washington because, in the sharing of responsibility between the two Departments, there were areas in which neither was willing to make a firm decision. It was a situation in which "the administration of Germany could not be separated from the foreign policy of the United States so it was a multiple show," Clay stated, "a show which there was no boss other than the President. Obviously he can't be drawn into everyday administrative problems."<sup>208</sup>

From a motivational perspective, Clay was the most fiercely anti-communist decision maker among the Americans during the pre-crisis period, almost to the point of bellicosity. He regarded the economic revival of Germany and the formation of a capitalistic and pro-American West German state as an overriding objective to be pursued irrespective of Russian opposition. Clay did not waver in his conviction that Berlin must be held by America at all costs. Both in Washington and in Germany, Clay was seen as the dominant figure and the driving force behind U.S. policy. His high standing in Washington enabled him to play a prominent part not only in determining United States occupation policy in Germany but in the whole conduct by the West of the Cold War in Europe.<sup>209</sup>

During the pre-crisis period in 1948, Clay forged a policy of firmness largely on his own initiative and made a large number of decisions with surprising quickness and without official clearance from Washington. His admirers commended him for having "calm assurance, absence of anxiety, and resolute firmness in making decisions."<sup>210</sup> Alternatively, his critics saw him as "an overbearing figure, whose self-confidence led to making impulsive decisions and forcing issues, creating a climate caustic to negotiations."<sup>211</sup>

Although Clay's deep distaste of communism was well known, when he first arrived in Germany he believed that it was possible to work with the Russians. After several years of dealing with Moscow, however, Clay appeared to have concluded that Russian policy in Germany was not directed at Allied cooperation but at

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<sup>207</sup> Ratchford, B.U., Ross, W.D. *Berlin Reparations Assignment* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1947), 57; Zink, *The United States in Germany*, 69; and Peterson, *The American Occupation of Germany*, 57.

<sup>208</sup> Hadsel, F.L. *U.S. Occupation in Europe*, quoting General Clay.

<sup>209</sup> Shlaim, *The United States and the Berlin Blockade, 1948-1949*, 101.

<sup>210</sup> Smith, J.E. *The Defense of Berlin* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1963); Donovan, F. *Bridge in the Sky* (New York: David McKay, 1968), 8-9.

<sup>211</sup> Schick, J. *The Berlin Crisis, 1958-1962* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971), 273.

spreading Communism. Clay's perspective shifted to the Truman Administration's thinking that the immediate threat to America's interest in a stable Europe came not from a resurgent Germany but from an expansionist Russia. In this changed international environment, Clay's perspective was that America's interests would be best served not in working with Russia to repress Germany, but in rebuilding Germany in order to contain Russia. This was the psychological perspective behind Clay's entire approach to the German problem from 1946 onward. "We had created a political vacuum in Central Europe and unless we could restore some sort of political opportunity to the German people, there was nothing we could do to prevent Communism from taking over. Therefore, we had the problem of rebuilding Germany."<sup>212</sup> All of the main features in Clay's approach fitted neatly into the pattern of the Truman's Administrations new Cold War foreign policy.

Clay would not have been able to proceed along this path of rebuilding Western Germany so rapidly without the active support of the Truman Administration. It was not a personal policy he was conducting but an official one. It was a policy based on the tacit assumption that Germany's geostrategic position and industrial potential made Berlin essential to the effective containment of Russia, and that Germany must be integrated into the emergent anti-Soviet coalition. The drive to build a strong Germany with a prosperous capitalist economy also fit in with the Truman Administration's commitment to a free and multilateral world trading system – a commitment which existed independently of the doctrine of containment.<sup>213</sup>

Similar to the other Americans, as the Berlin crisis grew closer in 1948, Clay's psychological stress levels gradually increased. Although the U.S. Military Governor had sent previous warnings of the potential for Russian military action to Washington, Clay did not in fact believe that there was an immediate danger of war prior to the Soviet Union enacting the blockade. Throughout his stay in Germany, he was doubtful of the possibility of war with Russia, and he was one of the principal supporters of the view that war was unlikely.<sup>214</sup> This estimate, however, was suddenly reversed in a cable Clay sent on 5 March, 1948 to General Chamberlin, Chief of Army Intelligence, in which Clay stated with alarm that the possibility of war could no longer be excluded.

"For many months, based on logical analysis, I have felt and held that war was unlikely for at least 10 years. Within the last few weeks, I have felt a subtle change in Soviet attitude which I cannot define but which now gives me a feeling that it may come with dramatic suddenness. I cannot support this change in my own thinking with any data or outward evidence in relationships other than to describe it as a feeling of a new tenseness in every Soviet individual with whom we have official relations. I am unable to submit any official

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<sup>212</sup> *Interview with Lucius D. Clay*, Dulles Oral History Project, John Foster Dulles Papers, Princeton University.

<sup>213</sup> "Interview with Lucius D. Clay", 16 July, 1974, 18, Harry S. Truman Library.

<sup>214</sup> Clay, *Decision in Germany*, 354.

report in the absence of supporting data but my feeling is real. You may advise the Chief of Staff of this for whatever it may be worth if you feel it advisable.”<sup>215</sup>

Clay explained that although the intelligence reports that came to his desk contained nothing to cause suspicion, his instincts told him that a definite change in the attitude of the Russians in Berlin had occurred and that something was about to happen.<sup>216</sup> Only two days previously, however, Clay had reiterated in a cable to the U.S. Army Public Information Division, his long standing conviction that the philosophical communist threat to all of Europe was much more immediate and serious than the threat of physical war.<sup>217</sup> Initially, Clay's behavior seemed to align with Janis and Mann's dysfunctional behavior pattern of hypervigilance, a defined measure of heightened stress in which the policymaker fails to recognize and evaluate open alternatives, searches frantically for a solution, perseveres in thinking about a limited number of alternatives, and then adheres to a hastily contrived solution that seems to promise immediate relief, often at the cost of post decisional regret.<sup>218</sup> However, the conflicting reports were probably also caused by Clay attempting to play into Washington politics at the time or can even be attributed to his desire to conform to group pressure in the previous context of groupthink. To highlight this illustration, Clay's cable on 5 March was dispatched in response to a U.S. Army visit to Berlin by General Chamberlain, in which he was cautioned as to the poor state of readiness of U.S. armed forces, the fact that major military appropriation bills were pending before congressional committees, and the need to galvanize American public opinion to support increased defense expenditures. Clay was an Army officer after all and he evidently succumbed to group pressure as a favor was requested by a fellow Army soldier for the future health of their shared service. In this case, groupthink caused Clay to share an illusion of invulnerability with others in the “ingroup” and there was clearly a loss of independent thinking.<sup>219</sup> This case highlights that Clay's cable was sent directly to Chamberlain, not through the normal command channels, with the probable purpose of assisting the military chiefs in their congressional testimony. Nonetheless, it was not, in Clay's opinion, related to any change in Soviet strategy.<sup>220</sup> Even so, the report caused a full-scale war scare in Washington.<sup>221</sup> It is remarkable that Clay was not more concerned about damaging his credibility with decision makers in Washington and being perceived as reckless by superiors in the U.S. executive chain of command.

Regardless of his motivation and in spite of appearing foolish at the time, Clay had correctly interpreted Moscow's future imposition of the Berlin blockade considering the perspective of what he thought the Soviet Union strategy was going to be for the mastery of Europe to counter the Marshall Plan. Likely due to

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<sup>215</sup> Lucius D. Clay to General Stephen J. Chamberlain, Director of Intelligence, Army General Staff, 05 March, 1948, *The Papers of General Lucius D. Clay: Germany 1945-1949*, edited by Jean Edward Smith, Vol. II (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1974), 568.

<sup>216</sup> Clay, *Decision in Germany*, 354.

<sup>217</sup> Clay to Parks, 3 March, 1948, *Clay Papers*, Vol. 2, 564.

<sup>218</sup> Janis and Mann, *Decision Making: A Psychological Analysis of Conflict, Choice, and Commitment*, 51.

<sup>219</sup> Turner, M., Pratkanis, A. “A social identity maintenance model of groupthink.” *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 210-235.

<sup>220</sup> Clay to Parks, 3 March, 1948, *Clay Papers*, Vol. 2, 568. See also: Smith, *The View from USFET*, 75-76.

<sup>221</sup> Kennan, *Memoirs*, 400-401. See also Millis, *The Forrestal Diaries*, 387-388.

fortunate timing, Clay made this assessment prior to Soviet Marshal Sokolovsky's walk-out of the Allied Control Council on 20 March. As pre-crisis stress levels continued to build for Clay, through Janis and Mann's behavioral pathology of defensive avoidance, Clay bolstered his hardline policy views with wishful thinking that Soviet strategy and tactics were more aggressive than they actually were, and worked out in advance within the framework of a long term that required timely U.S. attention. "It was in Soviet interest," Clay stated, "to permit relationships to deteriorate, to wage a war of nerves recreating the fear in Europe which alone could make possible the further advance of Communism."<sup>222</sup> For Clay, he believed the Soviets were interested in the domination of Europe but there were two obstacles to which he had control: Allied troops in Germany which could not be penetrated without war and the American presence in Berlin which prevented Communism in Eastern Europe from spreading into Western Europe. Therefore, the Soviet Government decided that a break in Germany was desirable.<sup>223</sup>

While some of his colleagues were ready to contemplate withdrawal from the exposed U.S. position in Berlin during the pre-crisis period, as stress levels increased Clay continued to bolster his conviction that the United States must stand fast in Berlin. He expressed it powerfully during the pre-crisis period in response to an invitation by Secretary of the Army Kenneth Royall to restate his views on America's position in Berlin.

"We have lost Czechoslovakia. Norway is threatened. We retreat from Berlin. When Berlin falls, Western Germany will be next. If we mean to hold Europe against Communism, we must not budge. We can take humiliation and pressure short of war in Berlin without losing face. If we withdraw, our position in Europe is threatened. If America does not understand this now, does not know that the issue is cast, then it never will and communism will run rampant. I believe the future of democracy requires us to stay."<sup>224</sup>

Clay's bellicose hardline approach in 1948 was motivated by his perception of Soviet Union as a threatening expansionist power that was testing America's commitment to defend Europe. With Clay's motivational perspective of the threat came corresponding stress that served as significant undercurrent in directing his behavior during the pre-crisis period. He firmly believed that the Soviet Government expected the western Allies to withdraw from Berlin and routinely communicated to Washington the negative impacts on the confidence of a defenseless Western Europe to major foreign policy objectives. His personal telegrams with the Department of State and the Secretary of the Army emphasized Europe's dependence on the United States to support and defend its interests until it could properly recover.<sup>225</sup> Clay inferred that the loss of Berlin

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<sup>222</sup> Clay, *Decision in Germany*, 160.

<sup>223</sup> *Ibid.*, 160.

<sup>224</sup> *Ibid.*, 161.

<sup>225</sup> Shlaim, *The United States and the Berlin Blockade, 1948-1949*, 109.



might mean the loss of Europe and he communicated this incessantly with Washington. With the support of the other Allies, he was determined to maintain the American position.<sup>226</sup>

In review of the pre-crisis period, psychological analysis of the key American decision makers who took charge of the Berlin crisis makes it clear that significant differences existed in personal style, emphasis, and detail. The fundamental perspectives through which each U.S. decision maker saw the external world, as well as their individual situations, lead to routine levels of stress that were captured through the measure of individual integrative complexity. While significant differences existed between the Americans, analysis also reveals a shared account that was aligned with the central decision maker, the U.S. President. American motivational perspectives of the Soviet Union as a threat constituted the broad psychological environment during pre-crisis and characterized decision conditions; they also set the framework for increasing stress, decreasing complexity and impacting U.S. policy making behavior during the onset of crisis.

#### BERLIN 1948, CRISIS PERIOD

#### PRESIDENT TRUMAN FINDINGS DURING ACUTE CRISIS

The environment in Washington was of considerable stress, doubt, and indecision on the part of President Truman during the acute phase of the Berlin blockade crisis period. 1948 was an election year in the United States and the President was deeply preoccupied with domestic politics. From both motivational and cognitive perspectives, Truman was placed under even greater pressure at the start of the Berlin crisis as the U.S. President's heightened perception of the Soviet threat, the urgency of time, and the increased possibility of hostilities complicated his ability to process information and make decisions. When all of the ground approaches to Berlin were blocked on 24 June, it served to threaten western interests while perceived time constraints on the situation presented Truman with one of the most acute dilemmas of the Cold War era. If he resorted to force to break the blockade, he might initiate World War III. Conversely, if he failed to take any action and withdrew from Berlin under duress, America's policy in Germany and greater Europe would suffer a major setback. The increase in stress served to reduce the cognitive processing complexity of the President and had a significant impact upon his decision making behavior.

Utilizing the perspective of Janis and Mann's conflict-theory model to frame the U.S. President's decision making problem, while Truman determined that he had to act to avert domestic and foreign policy losses, any action that came to mind entailed serious risks of war. Truman faced significant setbacks on every front – the kind of situation that Janis and Mann indicate produces high anxiety. As the U.S. President believed that western interests were immediately threatened by the Soviet Union, Truman held Cabinet consultations

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<sup>226</sup> Clay, L.D. "Berlin", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 41, No. 1 (October 1962).

based upon perceived time constraints. President Truman's decreased integrative complexity contributed to the decision making pathologies that followed.

Expanding upon the President's dilemma, the basic constraint and major source of stress in the decision process was the existence of three imperatives of American foreign policy that could not be reconciled without making tradeoffs that entailed risking significant loss. These were: 1) maintaining the American position in Berlin, 2) avoiding hostilities, and 3) proceeding with implementation of Allied diplomatic objectives in Germany. The first option effectively ruled out the course of withdrawal from the capital, which was favored by some American officials. The second option precluded the resort to coercive measures to compel the Soviet Union to rescind the blockade. The third option meant that the Administration could not negotiate because nothing could be offered in the way of concessions that would be of value to the Russians.

Nonetheless, the Truman Administration had no good options or coherent strategy for coping with the crisis, and the contradictory nature of these basic imperatives prevented the President from developing a satisfactory solution that would meet American objectives without risking war. Thus, Truman's goal became finding a way to address the U.S. foreign policy problem without resorting to conflict. Therefore, from the outset of the acute crisis phase, decision conditions of intense stress began to affect the President's behavior. From the moment Truman learned of the presence of the Soviet missiles in Cuba, the U.S. President engaged in the kind of search for a policy alternative that Janis and Mann describe in their decision making construct.

Concerning domestic politics, the President's insecure domestic political base, coupled with his goal to gain a second term as President in late 1948, weighed heavily on his conduct of foreign policy. With the Democratic convention coming up on 12 July, the timing of the Soviet blockade at the end of June was problematic for Truman. As he preferred to postpone any public action on the Berlin blockade until after his nomination was secured, Truman found himself under immense stress because of potential negative political ramifications of the crisis. Initially the U.S. President refrained from making any comments on the Russian blockade at press conferences and Truman instructed General Clay not to make statements referring to the possibility of war over Berlin.<sup>227</sup> At the same time, Truman was not oblivious to the opportunity offered by the Berlin crisis for helping to improve his electoral prospects. According to 1948 polls, one of the primary demands of the American public was that its President's foreign policy be firm and resolute.<sup>228</sup>

Pre-crisis forewarning to Washington of the approaching adversarial action in Germany had done little to lessen the predicament for Truman because no decision was ever taken on how to respond to a decisive Soviet move to isolate Berlin from its vital supply sources in the Western zones. Conflicted decision during pre-crisis had caused policymaker defensive avoidance behavior that served to constrain the formulation of

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<sup>227</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1948* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1973), Vol. 2, 928.

<sup>228</sup> Almond, G.A. *The American People and Foreign Policy* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1950), 106.

any definite plans to meet this contingency. After the Soviet military action took place however, the decision on how to respond to Russian action could no longer be postponed.

Although the dysfunctional behavior of groupthink was observed among Truman Administration officials during pre-crisis, the arrival of the acute crisis phase brought intense division of opinion among the President's Staff over the feasibility of maintaining the Western position in Berlin. This certainly did not make the task of making a decision any easier. At the inception of the blockade, Berlin was not accepted by all senior officials as vital to American interests. There were major conflicting views as to whether the American position could even be defended. There were those who regarded the situation in Berlin as hopeless and America's ultimate withdrawal as unavoidable. And there were others, who while fully aware of Berlin's strategic vulnerability, thought that there were overriding political reasons for staying there. Nonetheless, the final decision was repeatedly deferred and ultimately had to be made at the highest level of the U.S. President.

In the first days of the 1948 Soviet blockade the Truman Administration's behavior indicated that it was almost paralyzed by crisis induced stress based on the difficulty of the decision at hand. Truman and his Administration did not seek decisive action immediately on the difficult decision and certainly did not rush action based upon readily apparent time constraints. To illustrate, even though the Russians implemented the blockade on 24 June, President Truman was not actually informed of the Soviet action until 25 June when he and his advisors first met to seriously discuss the Berlin situation after a Cabinet meeting. As he was briefed the known facts, the President was silent as he mused in the predicament of decision conflict. Supported by the data set taken from President Truman's statements during acute crisis, Truman's integrative complexity declined because of the competing issues over staying in Berlin and his reluctance to let the situation develop into an issue that could ignite war. He could not avoid making tradeoffs as each of the available options entailed the risk of significant loss.

As a result, Truman made no decision for more than a day after being made aware of available information on the operational situation in Germany. Due to increasing pressures to the President's foreign policy goals and the added weight of appearing strong in the environment of U.S. domestic elections, a quick decision was not possible for Truman. Inevitably the American President was going through extensive personal reflection and deliberation over the choice at hand. Although no evidence exists of Truman personally denying responsibility for the Berlin decision, one could surmise that perhaps the President was hoping that an idea would materialize or someone would do something to improve the situation.

Fortunately, Truman may have been granted his wish. In circumstances where no good options were available, the President's choice on foreign policy in Germany was influenced by other events the day afterward. Truman's Cabinet was informed that an airlift of supplies to Allied personnel was already in

progress in Berlin. After making no commitment to a firm policy decision the previous day, in an environment of high stress the President executed no formal decision or commitment but simply validated the actions already taken by General Clay in directing that the airlift be put on a full scale organized basis.<sup>229</sup> In a state of decreased integrative complexity, Truman's actions could be considered characteristic of Janis and Mann's dysfunctional behavior pattern of unconflicted adherence, the behavior pathology that pertains to the perceived risks to a policymaker not making a decision or taking some kind of protective action. If risks are assessed to be low, there is little stress and the decision maker can ignore the information. However, this behavior is dysfunctional when it is a means of avoiding the stress associated with confronting a difficult decision. In this case, the easy decision for Truman was to make no formal policy commitments but simply continue events that were already occurring in Berlin. Not changing from the status quo involved little perceived risk and certainly reduced pressure on Truman.

Thus, the President went along with prior actions that presented minimal risk and subsequently made no difficult decisions on his own. In this case, Truman's specific dysfunctional behavior pattern assisted him in avoiding the stress associated with confronting the challenging task of deciding U.S. foreign policy in Berlin. Although the Allied airlift began to steadily emerge as a plausible policy over the crisis period, specifically during acute crisis, it was not obvious to Truman that the airlift could potentially be a viable long term foreign policy solution to the Berlin problem. Therefore, Truman's unconflicted choice caused no problems to arise, and could be considered dysfunctional on the President's part as his behavior occurred before it became apparent that the airlift was the best response option for the United States.

The day afterward on 27 June, even though the increase in stress contributed to Truman's restricted cognitive complexity, central decision maker behavior allowed the U.S. airlift to continue in an extremely tense environment. In Washington, the senior advisors of Truman's Cabinet held a conference to consider the top three courses of action that would be recommended to the President – withdrawal from Berlin, retention of Berlin "by all possible means, including supplying Berlin by convoy or using force in some other manner," and maintenance of the American position in Berlin while seeking resolution of the dispute through diplomacy and postponing the ultimate decision to stay or withdraw.<sup>230</sup> Although some discussion centered on the means to augment the American position in Europe, the results of the conference displayed a marked lack of decisiveness.<sup>231</sup> Compounding the unwillingness to risk an armed conflict over Berlin, was procrastination over the basic question of whether or not to stay in Germany. The fundamental question was centered over the likelihood of war with the Soviets but as this conundrum was never solved, the decision was deferred to President Truman.

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<sup>229</sup> Truman, *Memoirs*, Vol. 2, 148.

<sup>230</sup> Millis, *The Forrestal Dairies*, 452-453.

<sup>231</sup> *Ibid.*, 454-455.

Truman's Cabinet advisors finally met with the President at the White House on 28 June and briefed him on the results of the conference held the previous afternoon. The Cabinet introduced a discussion on the specific question – "do we to stay in Berlin or not?" At this stage, Truman was sitting alone in a corner of the room, visibly concerned, quiet, and deep in thought. As the Cabinet proceeded to outline their arguments, the President interrupted the meeting saying there would be no discussion on the U.S. position in Berlin, stating abruptly, "We are going to stay." Truman clearly perceived serious risks to be inherent in the continued lack of commitment to a foreign policy in Berlin. Only a short while after the Soviet move, he identified the acceptable policy to be the U.S. remaining in Berlin while distinguishing the military airlift as the instrument with which he would enact the policy. Although it took some time for the President to make a commitment, his decision displayed determination while also avoiding any appearance of recklessness or bellicosity. A firm policy decision was required of Truman and he made a decision that exemplified the assertion of presidential leadership in crisis.

The Cabinet Secretaries, despite having heard Truman's forthright view, suggested the problem might not have been fully thought through. The Secretaries voiced their reluctance to have the United States committed to a position in which it might have to fight outnumbered against the Soviet Union. Truman dismissed this angle and said that that situation would be dealt with when it developed. The U.S. decision was firm and final. By asserting his own preferences in this incisive fashion, Truman also provided a sense of presidential leadership and direction which countered further dysfunctional behavior and set the course of the Berlin crisis on a positive trajectory toward achieving a peaceful solution.<sup>232</sup>

The decline in cognitive complexity accompanied by Truman's single observed dysfunctional behavior pattern, serves to demonstrate that the American President was slightly affected by rigid and distorted information processing when stressed during the acute phase of crisis. Ultimately, Truman's anti-Soviet policy goals and his personally authored strategic doctrine was probably a large part of Presidential motivation to retain the American position in Berlin. By launching the airlift, America did not incur an irrevocable commitment to defend its position in Berlin at all costs; the option of withdrawal at a later stage was not foreclosed.<sup>233</sup> The airlift was only conceived as a temporary measure to gain time for resolving the crisis by negotiations. An account of Truman's behavior makes it clear that by reinforcing the airlift, he hoped to be able to feed Berlin until the diplomatic deadlock could be broken.<sup>234</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> Destler, I.M., *Presidents, Bureaucrats, and Foreign Policy*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972).

<sup>233</sup> Shlaim. *The United States and the Berlin Blockade, 1948-1949*, 210.

<sup>234</sup> Truman, *Memoirs*, Vol. 2, 130. See also Tunner, *Over the Hump*, 159.

## SECRETARY MARSHALL FINDINGS DURING ACUTE CRISIS

The blockade of Berlin was startling to Marshall as it confirmed his belief that Moscow aimed to extend Russia's domination over the whole of Germany. While it can be argued that Marshall's own foreign policy behavior in Germany contributed to the imposition of the Berlin blockade and an escalation of the Cold War, it was his initial perception of the Soviet Union as an expanding threat to the status quo that was key. Since he regarded this eventuality as the greatest threat to the security of the United States and her European allies, the blockade brought great psychological stress upon the Secretary, who was predisposed to resist the Soviet action. To accept adverse consequences of such magnitude without a struggle would have been contrary to Marshall's understanding of what was at stake in the crisis. Marshall's view of Russian policy in Eastern Germany as indicative of a long-term plan to dominate the whole of Germany, while certainly wrong in retrospect, was not an unrealistic judgement at the time. When the Soviet blockade brought a substantial increase in stress, however, the subsequent decline in Marshall's cognitive complexity led him to assume too quickly that conflict over Germany was inevitable and that there was no room for compromise.

No other crisis during Marshall's tenure as Secretary of State brought relations between the United States and the Soviet Union closer to the edge of war. From both motivational and cognitive perspectives, Marshall's perception of the threat, the marked increase in salience of time and heightened propensity for conflict placed the Secretary under significant stress. "During crisis over the Berlin blockade," reported Marshall's State Department aide, "the outbreak of a third world war, involving military combat on a vast scale all around the globe, seemed an imminent possibility. In our Secretary, this produced a grim preoccupation with the implications of the situation."<sup>235</sup> In acute crisis, increasingly difficult decision conditions brought about a marked decline in Marshall's cognitive processing complexity that had an impact on his behavior as the U.S. Secretary of State. Marshall's behavioral comportment changed to become increasingly introspective, tentative, and his choices were marked by indecision.<sup>236</sup>

At the initiation of the acute phase of crisis, as Marshall's anxiety levels increased, he began to increasingly exhibit the dysfunctional behavior pattern identified by Janis and Mann as defensive avoidance. To illustrate, on 24 June after the Soviet blockade commenced, there was an extremely long conference between representatives of Secretary Marshall's State Department and the U.S. Department of the Army to consider the situation in Berlin that ended in discord. The only agreement among the group was that for the time being, inquiries from the press should be answered by the State Department with the words, "No comment."<sup>237</sup> The Secretary of State similarly procrastinated in making any concrete decisions when dealing with other Department of Defense entities in Washington for the purposes of avoiding stress. While division

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<sup>235</sup> Halle, L.J. *The Cold War as History* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1971), 167.

<sup>236</sup> Shlaim, *The United States and the Berlin Blockade, 1948-1949*, 181.

<sup>237</sup> Marshall to Douglas, 27 June, 1948, in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1948*, Vol. 2, 926.

of opinion among Washington defense officials over the American position in Berlin made the task of making decisions extremely difficult, as the key U.S. decision maker, Marshall's defensive avoidance led to a lack of firmness with his subordinates and a reduction in demand signal for material to support executive decision making by the President on the substance of policy.<sup>238</sup>

To compound the Secretary's defensive avoidance, from a cognitive perspective Marshall was also aware of the pressure of time constraints on America's response to the Berlin crisis that drove his stress levels even higher. "Our general estimate," he wrote on 27 June, "is that the current supply situation in Berlin will last for two to three weeks. We intend to utilize this period in every way possible to reinforce our general position and to keep the initiative in dealing with the Soviets."<sup>239</sup> Keeping the American position that Marshall described would require making clear executive decisions but this is something that never happened. As procrastination continued over the days in an atmosphere of high stress specifically due to time constraints, there was a growing feeling within the State Department that the Berlin situation should be given emergency consideration by the National Security Council so that a conclusion might be reached regarding America's policy in Berlin.<sup>240</sup> Even so, communication continued to be focused internally to the U.S. Government and Secretary Marshall never formally elevated the Berlin policy issue to higher levels or sought external advice on the situation. Nonetheless, as Marshall's complexity declined in acute crisis, his behavioral patterns continued to align with Janis and Mann's dysfunctional behavior pathology of defensive avoidance.

During acute crisis, evidence also demonstrates that Marshall continued to be influenced by the psychological phenomenon of groupthink at the State Department. In this social context, group members tried to minimize conflict and reach a consensus on future actions without critical evaluation of alternative solutions by actively suppressing dissenting viewpoints, and by isolating themselves from outside influences.<sup>241</sup> Secretary Marshall elected to maintain discussions within the confines of the U.S. State Department during acute crisis and went along with the recommendations of his staff officers without a critical evaluation of alternative viewpoints. In this process Marshall's behavior demonstrated a marked loss of individual creativity, uniqueness, and independent thinking regarding possible solutions to the immediate problem in Berlin. Marshall's behavior and desire for conformity in his organization contributed to the poor quality of time late decision making material that eventually made it to the desk of the American President.

Another major source of motivational stress for Marshall involved the perception of the Soviet move as threatening the basic values of the United States. As the U.S. Secretary's complexity declined during acute crisis, Marshall's complexity seldom considered different perspectives when considering an issue and the

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<sup>238</sup> George and Smoke, *Deterrence in American Foreign Policy*, 133-134.

<sup>239</sup> Marshall to Douglas, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1948*, 926.

<sup>240</sup> Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense from John H. Ohly, 24 June, 1948, Secretary of Defense Office, CD 6-2-9, RG 330, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

<sup>241</sup> Janis, *Victims of Groupthink: a Psychological Study of Foreign Policy Decisions and Fiascos*, 17.

Secretary increasingly relied on one dimensional rules for interpreting events. For example, at a meeting with the President immediately after Russia's imposition of the blockade, Marshall stated that the Americans had "only one alternative of following a firm policy in Berlin or accepting the consequences of failure for the rest of our European policy goals."<sup>242</sup> Rarely did the Secretary mention other alternative possibilities or express diverse views from other possible policy perspectives.

As Marshall's complexity declined over the acute crisis phase, when disruptive threats were present the U.S. Secretary displayed overconfidence in believing that he would not find a better alternative than Washington's defective policy. Due to decision conditions of increasing stress, Marshall's state of decreased cognitive complexity led him to continue to exhibit Janis and Mann's behavior pathology of defensive avoidance as he avoided the stress associated with making necessary changes to originally chosen policies. For example, Marshall argued that U.S. policy had been successful in Greece, Italy, and France; that the Soviets had been reversed in Finland and had been severely shaken by Yugoslavia's break away. He flatly stated that "Russian activity in Berlin is the manifestation of the success of American policy abroad."<sup>243</sup> In this situation, Marshall exhibited overconfidence in the original U.S. policy as a form of defensive avoidance or bolstering, the psychological condition that helps policy makers maintain their expectations of an outcome with high gains and minimal losses. This behavior also helped the U.S. Secretary of State avoid the stress of future policy recommendations to President Truman that he knew would likely be contentious.

The Soviet blockade caused extremely difficult decision conditions for Marshall because he also perceived the move as directed at halting the implementation of Allied plans for the Western zones of Germany. In negotiations with the Russians, he believed that the suspension of these plans was too high a price to pay for lifting the blockade as the plans were directly related to the success of the Marshall plan. During the crisis period, Marshall firmly believed that the Soviet Government intended to utilize the situation in Berlin as leverage to reopen negotiations on the entire German question and agree to lift the blockade only on the condition that the Allies suspend operations in Germany until new agreements could be made. From a motivational standpoint this was a tremendous personal goal for Marshall and served to cause additional psychological stress. Marshall's corresponding decline in complexity produced linear thinking in formulating almost immediate conclusions that the U.S. should not negotiate with the Soviet Union under the circumstances in which the Americans found themselves.

In the absence of an operational decision in Germany, when news arrived that an airlift of supplies was in progress in Berlin on 25 June, amid reduced complexity Marshall's tendencies toward groupthink surfaced again when his behavior conformed to the actions of his superior officer, the President; the Secretary of State supported the collective indecision of the Truman Administration. At this juncture, Marshall exhibited Janis

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<sup>242</sup> Millis, *The Forrestal Dairies*, 459.

<sup>243</sup> *Ibid.*, 459.



and Mann's behavior pattern of unconflicted adherence when he expressed no alternate views or arguments toward an acceptable solution. A day later, when the means of using the airlift to break the blockade arrived on 26 June, Marshall again adhered to Truman's decision to continue the airlift of supplies and sustained the status quo regarding ground U.S. force presence in Berlin. Marshall's dysfunctional behavior helped to reduce stress levels associated with the difficult decision to use force. Until Truman made the firm decision for the Americans to stay in Berlin on 28 June, in Marshall's state of decreasing complexity, the Secretary adhered to trends set by the President and did not forward any policy recommendations to Truman on his own accord. Marshall's behavior again highlighted a loss of creativity and independent thinking associated with groupthink in the context of acute crisis.

An important factor for Marshall regarding Berlin was his understanding of the formal military balance which initially brought about a mindset of despair. The military balance in Berlin placed the U.S. at an overwhelming disadvantage against the Soviets. More than two million Germans lived in the three Western sectors of the city and became dependent on Allied reserve stocks and airlift replacements. The Allied occupation forces, with an overall number of 20,000, including military personnel, civilians, and dependents, were no match for more than 30 Russian divisions that could be dispatched to any trouble areas at short notice. Sensitive to the need to deal with the Russians from a position of strength, he held out little hope for diplomacy and feared that America's weakness in conventional military forces in Germany might make the Russians uncompromising in negotiations and even encourage Moscow's decision to execute military operations. For this reason, the extent of America's military unpreparedness was a source of major stress that reduced Marshall's cognitive complexity and encouraged further maladaptive behavior. When Marshall placed the President's well known anti-Soviet foreign policy goals against a military balance that far outweighed Soviet forces over those of the Americans in Berlin, his only option was that of continued defensive avoidance.

Marshall's defensive avoidance became pronounced when it was clear that President Truman could no longer avoid making a foreign policy decision on Berlin. Although initially the Secretary of State was outspoken on the Soviet-American military balance, Marshall began to gradually minimize the importance of the U.S. military position. Although disruptive threats were clearly present in the form of Soviet military strength from the American perspective, under significant stress Marshall looked past facts that his vast military experience told him were of critical importance, and bolstered the American position with more favorable information that convinced him of positive gains with minimal losses against the Soviets. For example, in his major official public statement of the U.S. position on 30 June, Marshall did not emphasize military composition, but highlighted legalities underlining the American intention to stay in Berlin. He told the press, "We are in Berlin as a result of agreements between the Governments on the areas of occupation in Germany

and we intend to stay.”<sup>244</sup> Marshall’s decreased cognitive complexity brought thinking that was unrealistic to the point of being catastrophic if the Soviets had possessed hostile intentions. His allowance of the President to move forward with the policy decision for the U.S. to remain in Berlin, makes it clear that Marshall used the psychological methods of selective attention and denial to cope with critical information to support Truman’s chosen goals and policies. The Secretary’s dysfunctional behavior allowed key American decision makers to believe that the U.S. would not find a better alternative than their present defective policy of Soviet containment.

Along with the lead decision maker, Marshall’s decline in cognitive complexity caused constrained and distorted information processing during the acute phase of crisis. This eventually led to dysfunctional behavior that had a significant impact on key American strategic decision making. Because Soviet Union intentions were unknown, Marshall’s declining complexity over decision conditions driven by his perception that America’s entire European policy was being threatened by the Russians, brought maladaptive behavior that served to create substantial delays to U.S. decision making when attempting to determine whether or not to defend the exposed Western outpost of Berlin. This dysfunctional behavior placed the American position at increased risk of being targeted by Soviet military action and indirectly increased the probability of war. Marshall’s handling of the Berlin crisis decision suggests that while he succumbed to the desires of the U.S. President, he was desperate for the Marshall Plan to succeed. Much like Truman, he was also willing to commit to the cause of conflict and eventual war to achieve his objectives.

#### GENERAL CLAY FINDINGS DURING ACUTE CRISIS

During the crisis period, General Clay appeared as a forthright and hardline American decision maker. Impatient, authoritarian, and possessing impossibly high confidence in the soundness of his own judgement, Clay was inclined to act rather than wait upon information or events. Juxtaposed against the background of considerable doubt and indecision in Washington, the American Military Governor in Berlin highlighted himself as incisively enforcing American interests in Germany and Cold War policy abroad. Clay also stood out as the most determined opponent of withdrawal from Berlin and any other form of compromise with Russia. Decision conditions in Berlin led to a decline in cognitive complexity that took part in driving the American Military Governor’s maladaptive behavior throughout the crisis period.

From the very beginning of the acute crisis phase, as stress levels peaked General Clay began to exhibit Janis and Mann’s dysfunctional behavior pathologies. On 24 June, 1948, when the full blockade was imposed by the Soviets, from a motivational perspective it threatened Clay’s basic American values while from a cognitive account it imposed the salience of time. The world, he believed, was “facing the most critical issue since Hitler

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<sup>244</sup> *Department of State Bulletin*, 4 July, 1948, 54.

embarked on his policy of aggression in World War II.”<sup>245</sup> According to Clay, the U.S. clearly had limited time to commit to action before its supplies of food and coal ran out. Given the magnitude of the threat to America’s basic values and the far reaching political repercussions of this threat, Clay’s psychological stress increased dramatically and lowered the complexity of his thinking. While the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington waited for a foreign policy to be determined by the President, General Clay responded immediately.<sup>246</sup> Clay’s lowered cognitive complexity levels led to calculations that the U.S. should respond instantly, even though American and Allied supply stockpiles in Berlin would not be exhausted for at least 30-45 days.<sup>247</sup> On impulse Clay decided to implement an airlift of supplies to Berlin and made his decision without consulting Washington. Clay’s behavior aligned with Janis and Mann’s dysfunctional behavior pattern of hypervigilance when his sudden emotional decision to break the Soviet blockade with Allied aircraft was made without gathering sufficient information or seeking the appropriate insight necessary to make an informed decision. Interestingly, the most beneficial decision for the Americans during the acute crisis phase was executed in a flawed manner by the key U.S. decision maker abroad with a clearly inaccurate understanding of the situation.

Highlighting Clay’s stress levels and reduced complexity, his cognitive processes during acute crisis were seldom characterized by multiple dimensions or alternate perspectives. On the first day of the Soviet blockade, Clay described the Russian action as “one of the most ruthless efforts in modern times to use mass starvation for political coercion” and never attempted to view the blockade from the perspective of the Soviet Union.<sup>248</sup> He perceived the blockade as brutal because it was directed against “innocent and helpless German civilians caught between the two sides” while discounting any Soviet political grievances or other Russian blockade objectives that could be understandable or even legitimate.<sup>249</sup> Clay’s single dimension thinking failed to take alternative perspectives into consideration when assessing the situation, clear evidence of declining cognitive complexity.

Returning to Janis and Mann’s dysfunctional behavior patterns, Clay also thought that in view of the vulnerability of the American position in Berlin, a high level U.S. decision should be taken immediately on how far the Americans were prepared to go. Somewhat surprising considering General Clay’s character and personality, in alignment with Janis and Mann’s behavioral pathology of defensive avoidance, on 27 July Clay denied responsibility for the decision and deferred the U.S. foreign policy decision on Berlin to decision makers in Washington. “We think that it is extremely important to stay, and we are prepared to stay unless German suffering drives us out. However, except for our capacity to stick it out, future actions would appear

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<sup>245</sup> Clay, *Decision in Germany*, 365.

<sup>246</sup> General Lucius Clay, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1948*, Vol. 2, 925.

<sup>247</sup> *Ibid.*, 925.

<sup>248</sup> Clay to the Department of the Army, 25 June, 1948, in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1948*, Vol. 2, 917.

<sup>249</sup> *Ibid.*, 917.

to be at the U.S. governmental level in Washington.”<sup>250</sup> Even so, General Clay did not let this view postpone any actions or decisions in Berlin that he thought were necessary, but he did feel the need to acknowledge for the record that Washington was responsible for foreign policy decisions during crisis.

Interestingly, the third component of crisis induced stress, the perception of a high probability of involvement in military hostilities, was somewhat less pronounced for the American Military Governor. Clay, who had previously issued warnings of Russian action to Washington in the early part of the pre-crisis period, now rated the probability of war to be very low at the extreme height of the Berlin crisis. Even though the military balance in Berlin placed the U.S. at an overwhelming disadvantage against the Soviets, much like Secretary Marshall, Clay conveniently looked past these critical facts. This is further evidence of Clay behaving in accordance with Janis and Mann’s pathology of defensive avoidance. Of the information available, General Clay only used that which had become comfortable for the purposes of supporting his chosen policy goal of remaining in Berlin at all costs. Clay certainly discounted military information that conflicted with his views and by using selective attention, Clay also continued to exhibit dramatic overconfidence in his policy as a form of bolstering, the psychological condition that helps policy makers maintain their expectations of an outcome with high gains and minimal losses. To highlight the severely biased perspective that Clay held, on 25 June he stated, “our continued presence in Berlin may well prevent rather than build up Soviet pressures which could lead to war.”<sup>251</sup>

As the Soviet threat was mere kilometers from his headquarters in Berlin and more than capable of disrupting American plans, Clay continued to exhibit the behavior pathology of defensive avoidance and bolstering. Clay even went to great lengths to report to Washington that superior Soviet military capability in Europe was not a sufficient reason in itself for assuming intentions, an approach that was extremely risky considering the alternatives of conflict and war. When asked specifically for his evaluation of the possibility of Soviet hostilities Clay replied, “I do not expect armed conflict. Obviously conditions are tense. However, our troops are in hand and can be trusted... nevertheless, we cannot be run over and a firm position always involves some risk in this type of situation.”<sup>252</sup> General Clay was convinced that he would not find a better alternative than his present position, even if it meant resorting to brinksmanship of conflict. To emphasize this point, Clay solemnly stated, “The Russians are trying to put on the final pressure but they cannot drive us out by an action short of war as far as we are concerned.”<sup>253</sup>

Clay’s reduced cognitive state calculated that if the Soviets wanted war, it was because Moscow believed that it was the right time and in such case, they would use any issue in Berlin as a pretext for their objectives. In Clay’s simplistic thinking, U.S. foreign policy decision making was extremely elementary because Moscow had

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<sup>250</sup> Smith, J.E. Ed., *The Papers of General Lucius D. Clay: Germany, 1945-1949*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1974), Vol. 2, 702.

<sup>251</sup> Clay Telegram to the Department of the Army, 25 June, 1948.

<sup>252</sup> Smith, *The Papers of General Lucius D. Clay: Germany, 1945-1949*, 699-700.

<sup>253</sup> Clay Telegram to Washington regarding the situation in Berlin, 27 June, 1948.

already decided what the Soviets were going to do. With this problematic mindset, the result for both the U.S. and Soviet Union would have been catastrophic war. On no single occasion did Clay mention the importance of avoiding conflict, instead he was anxious to focus the attention of his colleagues on the issue that Clay thought merited war: "The real issue is western Germany and its part in European recovery."<sup>254</sup> In a tone which reflected a measure of stress, on 29 June he delivered for the first time an impassioned phrase which he kept repeating throughout the crisis phase: "Please remember, emphasize, and never stop repeating that the real issue in Berlin is the American position in Europe and Soviet plans for western Germany."<sup>255</sup>

During the crisis period, an additional point of major motivational stress to General Clay was the danger posed to the U.S.-German relationship, something that he had helped to build. Clay believed that action was called for to not only counter Soviet tactics but also to preserve the partnership that he had been put in place to protect. He pointed out that the courageous resistance of the Berlin population would drive the Soviet Administration to extreme measures, and that the purpose of the Soviet blockade was to frighten the Berlin population. Clay stated, "Thousands of Germans have courageously expressed their opposition to Communism. We should not destroy their confidence by any show of departure. Once again, we have to sweat it out, come what may."<sup>256</sup> Clay firmly believed that if the Allies were to leave Berlin, his mission would be a failure and the German population would fall into the hands of Communism.

From a social perspective, available evidence suggests that Clay was also influenced by the psychological condition of groupthink with his U.S. Army and State Department clique in Germany. During acute crisis the U.S. Military Governor avoided raising alternative solutions to his original hardline approach and there was a complete loss of individual creativity and novel thinking. Clay's dysfunctional group dynamics in Berlin, or what could be considered the "in group", produced an "illusion of invulnerability" which inflated Clay's certainty that he was making the right decisions.<sup>257</sup> Clay routinely carried himself with impossible certainty during acute crisis and with the "in group", Clay significantly overrated his own abilities in decision making and significantly underrated the abilities of his opponents in Washington, or the "outgroup".<sup>258</sup> The speed with which he made significant decisions outside the purview of his superiors in Washington was an abnormal sign indicating dysfunction and cause for great concern.

Clay's psychological stress continued to build during acute crisis. In combination with very low integrative complexity, over time the U.S. Military Governor became completely inflexible. On which precise action the Americans should take, motivated stress amplified Clay's behavior to resist any action which might be construed as appeasement and he immediately discounted negotiations with Moscow. "I think governmental

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<sup>254</sup> Smith, J.E. Ed., *The Papers of General Lucius D. Clay: Germany, 1945-1949*, 702.

<sup>255</sup> *Ibid.*, 704.

<sup>256</sup> Clay, *Decision in Germany*, 366.

<sup>257</sup> Janis. *Victims of Groupthink: a Psychological Study of Foreign Policy Decisions and Fiascoes*, 20.

<sup>258</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

protests are of no value except for the record unless we have a plan for definite measures to be taken if there is Soviet rejection which is almost certain. I can only say that our remaining in Berlin means much to our prestige in Germany... to retreat now is to imply we are prepared to retreat further.”<sup>259</sup> To signal to the Russians that the U.S. was not prepared to retreat, less than a day after the Soviets imposed the blockade against the Allies, Clay’s reduced complexity led to Janis and Mann’s behavior pathology of hypervigilance when he immediately proposed an armed convoy in defiance. In an extremely short amount of time, Clay resorted to the use of force without taking time to properly consider other alternatives. In a telegram to the Department of the Army, Clay had already abandoned hope for reaching a satisfactory solution through diplomacy. “I am convinced,” he wrote, “that a determined movement of convoys with troop protection would reach Berlin and that such a showing might well prevent Soviet pressures.”<sup>260</sup>

The perception of a threat to basic American values and his decline of complexity constituted the base of Clay’s behavior to advocate strong action and use of force. Additionally, an important element of Clay’s unyielding stance was his belief that the Russians were bluffing, and that they would back down if challenged. He immediately relied on America’s air power to counter the blockade and deter the Russians from going any further. On 27 June, he asked for fifty additional transport planes to arrive in Germany to augment America’s air forces. The support of this request was urgent and he argued, “we are no longer at a point where we need to fear that the bringing in of reinforcements will influence the Soviet position. It is our view that they are bluffing and that their hand can and should be called now. They are definitely afraid of our air might. Moreover, arrival of aircraft will be the deciding factor in sustaining Allied firmness.”<sup>261</sup> Little could convince Clay that his march into the teeth of war was not justified. Under continued perception of Russian threat into the end of June, Clay further bolstered his arguments that the Soviet Government was not yet convinced of Allied determination and would continue to go further until Moscow met combined Allied resistance. “The Soviets know that the Allies also do not want war and they will continue their pressure to the point at which they believe hostilities might occur.”<sup>262</sup> Once again he recommended an armed convoy in order to bring the Russian leaders to this critical point. If it were up to General Clay himself, eventual conflict and war would solve the U.S. foreign policy dilemma in Berlin.

Like Truman and Marshall, Clay was similarly affected by rigid and distorted information processing during the acute phase of crisis, but the American Military Governor of Berlin differed in that he was thoroughly convinced that a show of Allied force to go to the brink of war would convince the Soviet leaders to back down. Therefore, Clay exhibited extremely risky behavior and recommended aggressive policies that had the consequences of driving the initial American response to the Soviet blockade on Berlin and forced his policy other key U.S. decision makers. Even so, the airlift proved to be an extremely effective measure as a policy

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<sup>259</sup> Smith, J.E. Ed., *The Papers of General Lucius D. Clay: Germany, 1945-1949*, 703.

<sup>260</sup> Clay, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1948*, 918.

<sup>261</sup> Smith, J.E. Ed., *The Papers of General Lucius D. Clay: Germany, 1945-1949*, 708.

<sup>262</sup> Clay, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1948*, 956-958.

solution and from this vantage point, the U.S. Military Governor's dysfunctional behavior could be considered to have had a beneficial impact by accident through coincidence. Although Clay was decisive and his actions were extremely responsive under immense strategic pressure during acute crisis, in general his behavior directly contributed to an increased risk of conflict.

#### PRESIDENT TRUMAN FINDINGS DURING ADVANCED CRISIS

The Soviet blockade continued to weigh heavily on the mind of President Truman during the second half of the crisis period. The U.S. President remained under significant stress due to the continued perception of the Russian threat, the pressure of time, and the remaining high possibility of war as the foreign policy crisis continued in Berlin. However, the data set gathered suggests that decision conditions during advanced crisis led to an increase in cognitive complexity for Truman and this can be linked to having a beneficial impact upon his decision making behavior during the advanced phase of crisis. The American President was able to regain complexity over the duration of the crisis period and exhibited decision making behavior that had an instrumental impact in resolving the foreign policy crisis through peaceful means.

Although the Soviet blockade continued to cause the U.S. President significant stress during the second half of the crisis period, by 13 July Truman had been successful in securing the Democratic nomination for the upcoming U.S. Presidential elections at the end of 1948. Even though domestic pressures were slightly relieved when the positive news came for his re-election bid to a second term as U.S. President, Truman remained under intense public scrutiny with regard to how he handled the Berlin crisis. During mid-July 1948, the mood of the American public remained mostly militant and unyielding. When asked whether Americans should force their way through Berlin, only 8 percent thought that it was bad idea while 86 percent said yes.<sup>263</sup> Truman was clearly under continued domestic pressure as his decisions on the Berlin blockade would be politicized by the opposing Presidential candidate, Governor Thomas E. Dewey.

As the crisis period protracted and decision conditions changed, the functional operation of the U.S. airlift in Berlin reduced the urgency of time pressure from a cognitive account. Originally, the airlift was a hastily derived temporary measure that was never intended to be a long-term campaign. But over time, operational sustainment of the U.S. airlift proved successful and the Americans allowed its continuation during the Truman Administration's foreign policy deliberations. As stress declined, cognitive complexity was regained by Truman and he developed a growing awareness of the relevance of America's air power as a viable solution to the Berlin problem. This approach dramatically boosted the confidence of the American President and tempered Truman's desire to pursue increasingly aggressive alternatives. Changing conditions and increased complexity assisted in Truman's realization that peaceful methods could be highly successful in the

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<sup>263</sup> LaFeber, W., "American Policy-Makers, Public Opinion and the Outbreak of the Cold War," in *The Origins of the Cold War in Asia*, edited by Y. Nagai and A. Iriye (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), 58.

context of America's objectives in Europe and led to his behavior in retaining the peaceful option of the Allied airlift.

Even though time permitted the western airlift of supplies to proceed unabated, there was a growing feeling that the Allies faced a critical decision by mid-July. Diplomatic negotiations were coming to a standstill as the Russians formally rejected multiple Western notes of protest. The international situation took a negative turn when Moscow raised the stakes of the crisis by questioning the basic Western rights to be in the German capital city in the first place. Accompanying his measured rise in cognitive complexity, Truman's behavior became noticeably more calculating and decisive. To illustrate, even before America's alleged legal rights of access to Berlin became the object of Moscow's attention, the legal position of the United States was a subject of intense study and scrutiny by Truman during advanced crisis in July.<sup>264</sup> After finalizing the American commitment to remain in Berlin, during the first week of July, Truman remarked that it was important to emphasize with the Russians "that we are in Berlin by terms of a legal agreement and the Russians cannot change that fact with direct or indirect pressure."<sup>265</sup> This statement was made privately to the President's advisors behind closed doors and indicates that in thinking through America's strategic position, legal factors constituted one of the parameters for justification of the American position in future negotiation.<sup>266</sup> It became increasingly apparent that as time went on during the crisis period, Truman valued the diplomatic process and desired to proceed with intensive rounds of consultations and deliberations with Moscow. By simultaneously allowing the airlift to continue in demonstration of their strategic air capabilities, Truman signaled that the Americans had concrete legal justification to proceed with routine Allied air operations in a non-threatening manner.

In facing the critical decision on Berlin, with increased cognitive complexity levels, Truman's behavior encouraged an environment of open and transparent communication within U.S. channels concerning the deliberation process in formulation of his decision. In mid-May 1948 for example, the President focused on the decision process through different levels of his administration, as well as other separate government organizations.<sup>267</sup> Contrary to the behavior of groupthink observed across Truman's staff during pre-crisis, in the advanced crisis phase, Truman and his subordinates performed a comprehensive reevaluation of America's position and the options that were available to the U.S. in Berlin. Significant amounts of time and attention were spent on collecting data as well as evaluating courses of action across various branches of the government. Vice limiting communications inside the government to key immediate U.S. decision makers and their organizations, American communications were also encouraged external to the Truman Administration and their military advisors. To illustrate, during the advanced phase of crisis, the American consultative

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<sup>264</sup> Shlaim, *The United States and the Berlin Blockade, 1948-1949*, 178.

<sup>265</sup> Millis, *The Forrestal Diaries*, 455.

<sup>266</sup> Scheinman, L., "The Berlin Blockade," in *International Law and Political Crisis*, edited by L. Scheinman and D. Wilkinson, (Boston: Little, Brown, 1968), 13-14.

<sup>267</sup> Shlaim, *The United States and the Berlin Blockade, 1948-1949*, 242.



process was extended to Washington analytic organizations and also included representatives of the competing political elite. Truman himself encouraged the idea that he should call into conference the majority and minority leaders of U.S. Congress to share support for major crisis decisions on Berlin instead of promoting an institutional consultative process.<sup>268</sup> As he regained complexity, the President structured U.S. information communications networks and intelligence organizations to maximize external influence and gain better information to maximize his decision advantage.

On Truman's direction, the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff began to participate actively in the process of evaluating alternatives which addressed interrelated problems of breaking the blockade with force vice continuing with the airlift.<sup>269</sup> The Joint Chiefs considered the options, made their recommendations to the Secretary of Defense, and through him, forwarded the decision to the National Security Council. Surprisingly, on 19 July among the recommendations from Washington included referring the problem of the German blockade to the United Nations for early decision and also for the U.S. to deliver a personal note to Stalin by a special representative of the American government reasserting its legal rights to remain in Berlin.<sup>270</sup> Contrary to acute crisis, rising complexity saw Truman become increasingly adept at processing information and formulating an increasing range of nonviolent options as the crisis progressed.

Truman's rise in complexity also brought increasing transparency to the decision making process. The most critical decision of the Berlin crisis period was made by the National Security Council on 22 July, which was requested by and presided over personally by President Truman. All members of the Council attended this meeting and also an unusually high number of invitees were also present from Berlin to include General Clay and his political advisor. This suggests that a highly thoughtful executive decision maker wanted to have face-to-face dialogue with the U.S. Commander in Berlin for the purposes of clarity and to minimize potential misunderstandings. As the meeting progressed, Truman listened as all of the U.S. options were covered; in extensive dialogue with the Council on the airlift and ground convoy options, the President settled on the main question that he wanted to decide: "How does the U.S. remain in Berlin without risking all-out-war?"<sup>271</sup>

At the culmination of the crisis period, with increasing cognitive complexity, Truman became increasingly attentive to threat cues and the risk of war weighed the heaviest on the American President. As diplomacy and negotiation with Moscow was fragile, Truman continued to face the critical decision on behalf of the Allies on whether or not to break the Russian blockade using military force. Calculating the risk of conflict and eventual war became a crucial consideration in Truman's resolution of the Soviet problem. As the President's integrative complexity increased, he insisted on hearing both sides of the Berlin issue from his top

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<sup>268</sup> Shlaim, *The United States and the Berlin Blockade, 1948-1949*, 243.

<sup>269</sup> Condit, *The History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*, 141-143.

<sup>270</sup> Shlaim, *The United States and the Berlin Blockade, 1948-1949*, 244.

<sup>271</sup> Minutes of the 16<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the National Security Council, held on Thursday, 22 July, 1948, President's Secretary File, Harry S. Truman Library.

policy makers and successfully considered different dimensions of the issue. The President became increasingly aware of the tremendous strategic ramifications that eventual war over Berlin would mean for the world. Truman believed that the crisis indicated that Moscow was seeking a pretext for war and his reluctance to supply such a pretext and the possibility of needlessly provoking the Soviets were important considerations for the President as his complexity improved.

Instead of exhibiting dysfunctional behavior, Truman demonstrated Janis and Mann's functional pathology of vigilance, the pattern of psychological coping that leads to good decisions when the policymaker realizes that certain policies are subject to encounter serious difficulties while acceptable alternatives can be found and implemented in the time available.<sup>272</sup> This approach served to provide a constraint on the means Truman would use to protect America's interests and is among one of the reasons that Truman ultimately rejected the idea of sending an armed convoy to break the blockade, in favor of the more cautious policy of continuing to supply Berlin with the airlift.<sup>273</sup> With an increasing measure of cognitive complexity, Truman exhibited functional behavior that successfully enabled a peaceful resolution to the crisis period.

Overall, contrary to pre-crisis, according with Janis and Mann, the most noteworthy feature of Truman's behavior during the advanced crisis period was his vigilant systematic search and evaluation of alternatives. In general, information was collected, processed, and consultations were held by his Administration after which the product was presented to Truman in a structured form that indicated the available options and likely consequences of each, calling on him to make a decision. Truman himself actively promoted analytic procedures for choice and executed for strategic decisions based on long-term considerations. The President's thoughtful decision process during advanced crisis stood in stark contrast against the depth of his procrastination during the pre-crisis period.

During advanced crisis, increasing integrative complexity allowed a number of factors to promote careful analytical consideration of the Berlin problem, causing vigilant decision making behavior in the highest office of the American government. First, the problem of the Berlin blockade that faced Truman, was the sole focus of the President's attention. Secondly, the nomination of Truman as the Democratic choice for a second term in the 1948 presidential campaign gave Truman increased confidence and made fundamental political choices easier to reach for the Administration. Third, the processing and analysis of information by a wide variety of organizations increased the fidelity of clear choices throughout the leadership chain. Finally, the vigilant processing of information inclined the decision makers to thoughtfully examine the worst case scenarios that could cause conflict and select contingency options that successfully avoided war.

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<sup>272</sup> Janis and Mann, *Decision Making: A Psychological Analysis of Conflict, Choice, and Commitment*, 62-63.

<sup>273</sup> Halle, L.J., *The Cold War as History*, (London: Chatto and Windus, 1971), 167.

## SECRETARY MARSHALL FINDINGS DURING ADVANCED CRISIS

During the advanced phase of the crisis period, Secretary Marshall remained under great stress due to the continued emphasis of the Russian threat in Berlin, the salience of time, and the remaining high possibility of war. Even so, the data set gathered for Marshall demonstrates that the U.S. Secretary of State's integrative complexity increased substantially during the advanced phase of crisis and had a beneficial influence upon his decision making behavior. Marshall was able to recover complexity over the duration of the crisis period and in doing so, contributed to policy decisions that had a positive impact in successfully resolving the Berlin crisis by peaceful means.

Marshall's increased cognitive complexity levels led to behavior that encouraged increasingly open and transparent communications in addition to the comprehensive analysis of available information. To illustrate, in mid-July a major reassessment of the U.S. position in Berlin and options available was directed by Marshall simultaneously at different levels of the State Department. The Secretary relentlessly pursued comprehensive information from his subordinates and this approach led to an increase in the quality of the material used to support executive decision making by the President. Guided by Marshall's heightened cognitive complexity levels, the State Department initiated an intensive study of the diplomatic aspects of the Berlin crisis. Even though he rarely mentioned alternative possibilities or expressed diverse views from other policy perspectives during the acute crisis phase, as Secretary Marshall's complexity improved during advanced crisis, he countered pre-crisis groupthink tendencies during advanced crisis by clearly differentiating both sides of the Berlin foreign policy issue and encouraged his subordinates to do the same. When combined with better insight, Marshall's rising complexity led him to believe that an intermediate course between a retreat from Berlin and a resort to force should be explored in direct talks with the Russians.<sup>274</sup> Inclined toward the informed estimate that the Soviet Union did not want war, Marshall's analysis concluded that provocative actions on America's part might initiate a chain of events that could push both sides into a series of escalating actions. Marshall's increase in complexity tempered his behavior and influenced the formation of novel policy approaches that had not been considered previously.

As decision conditions of advanced crisis changed and the Secretary regained cognitive complexity, Marshall made significant organizational structure changes at the State Department to cope with dynamic decisional tasks and the vastly increased work load during the crisis period. Marshall set up an ad hoc committee to process the information with which the State Department was being inundated from various sources and to keep the Berlin situation under constant review. Called the "Berlin Group", it was composed of various State Department officials connected with the crisis and served to instruct the State Department's officers at home and its ambassadors abroad on the execution of Berlin policy.<sup>275</sup> Marshall's flexible thinking prevented stress

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<sup>274</sup> Shlaim, *The United States and the Berlin Blockade, 1948-1949*, 242.

<sup>275</sup> Bohlen, C.E., *Witness to History, 1929-1969* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973), 280.

from rising because of information overload. State Department decision conditions were successfully controlled, enabling more effective information consumption during crisis and as a result, to possibility of a better outcome emerged.

Highlighting his rise in cognitive complexity, of the various perceived options for negotiating with the Soviet Union on future courses of action for Berlin, the one most favored by Marshall was direct diplomatic engagement with Moscow. Marshall believed that an effort should be made to approach Stalin directly.<sup>276</sup> Marshall's complexity levels encouraged him to emphasize directly to the highest level of Russian leadership the fact that the Allies did not desire war.<sup>277</sup> The Secretary stated, "We feel that we should explore every possibility which might lead to an agreed solution... An effort should be made to approach Stalin directly."<sup>278</sup> Additionally, highlighting his flexibility, Marshall continuously recommended that American decision makers should continue negotiations with the Soviets and only in the case of exhausted American efforts, place the problem before the United Nations.

An important factor for Marshall regarding Berlin continued to be his understanding of the formal military balance which overwhelmingly favored the Soviet Union during advanced crisis. Although Marshall put less emphasis on the importance of the U.S. military position in the presence of disruptive threats during acute crisis, as his cognitive complexity increased, the extent of America's military unpreparedness again came to the forefront of his analysis of the situation. Marshall told the Joint Chiefs on 19 July, "We are going to need eighteen months to prepare for what might happen in Berlin if the Russians are challenged there."<sup>279</sup> This calculus influenced Marshall to believe that negotiation with Stalin was the best available option for the United States. Thus, the diplomatic engagement option became his official foreign policy recommendation to the American President.

The fundamental American decision on Berlin was made public by Marshall at a press conference on 21 July in reply to a question about the possibility of war in Berlin. Marshall said:

"I can merely say at this time that our position I think is well understood. We will not be coerced or intimidated in any way in our procedures under the rights and responsibilities that we have in Berlin and generally in Germany. At the same time we will proceed to invoke every possible resource of negotiation and diplomatic procedure to reach an acceptable solution to avoid the tragedy of war for the world."<sup>280</sup>

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<sup>276</sup> Marshall to Douglas, 27 June, 1948, in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1948*, Vol. 2, 971.

<sup>277</sup> James V. Forrestal Diaries, 19 July, 1948, Princeton Library, 2369.

<sup>278</sup> Marshall to Douglas, 20 July, 1948, in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1948*, Vol. 2, 971.

<sup>279</sup> Murphy, *Diplomat Among Warriors*, 386-388.

<sup>280</sup> *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Harry S. Truman, 1948*, 413.

Marshall's succinct statement of American policy highlights two different dimensions of the decision at hand and successfully integrates them into a novel option that not only demonstrates advanced cognition, but also offered a peaceful option for conflict resolution. In his advanced complexity, Marshall was strongly opposed to the use of force and was a continuous advocate of American diplomacy throughout the advanced crisis phase. Instead of recommending a ground convoy to break the blockade, Marshall advocated status quo air power to supply the city, and moderate the risk to U.S. and Allied military position by exerting steady economic and political pressure on the Soviet Union to lift the blockade.

As Marshall's cognitive complexity improved, due to specific time constraints, the U.S. State Department continued to advocate that the Berlin situation should be considered by the National Security Council to reach a conclusion regarding America's policy in Berlin. In an environment conducive to external communication and collaboration external to the Department of State, Secretary Marshall formally recommended the Berlin policy issue to higher levels and sought Presidential approval. As Marshall's complexity increased, his behavioral patterns aligned with Janis and Mann's functional path of vigilance or the process of coping with stress that leads to good decision making.

The 22 July decision of the National Security Council was the most significant choice of the crisis period. It signaled that the Americans had chosen to rely on an expanded airlift and diplomatic approach to Stalin to cope with the threat to America's security. This course of action was largely a decision of Marshall's design and marked the end of the crisis period. Crucial to this transition from the period of crisis to post-crisis was the emergent perception that the airlift would continue to provide enough time for a diplomatic approach and agreement to be forged with Stalin.

Overall, Marshall's increase in cognitive complexity contributed to accurate information processing during the advanced phase of crisis. This eventually led to functional behavior that had a significant impact on key American strategic decision making. Although stress remained present as Soviet Union intentions were unknown, Marshall's rising complexity brought vigilant and adaptive behavior that served to enhance U.S. decision making when attempting to determine whether or not to break the Russian blockade with the use of force. The functionality of vigilant decision making behavior in choosing to continue the U.S. airlift placed the American position at reduced risk of Soviet hostilities and directly decreased the probability of conflict. Marshall's handling of the advanced crisis decision over the Berlin foreign policy issue suggests that even in the presence of stressful decision conditions, the Secretary was able to regain cognitive complexity levels and make measured recommendations that dissuaded American commitment to the cause of conflict, and effectively prevented war.

## GENERAL CLAY FINDINGS DURING ADVANCED CRISIS

During the advanced phase of the crisis period, General Clay remained under immense stress from both motivational and cognitive perspectives due to his perception of the close proximity of the Russian threat and the pressure of time under which the Americans had to commit to taking action. While Washington was never able to convince him that the Soviets intended war, in Clay's numerous visits to the United States he certainly felt the heightened sense of conflict from the U.S. President and other senior policy makers. The data set gathered for General Clay demonstrates that the U.S. Military Governor's integrative complexity increased only slightly from acute crisis to advanced crisis and resulted in negligible changes to his decision making behavior. Although he was able to regain some complexity over the duration of the crisis period, Clay's behavior made little contribution to the formulation of the U.S. policy decisions that led to a favorable outcome. If anything, Clay presented strong arguments opposing the peaceful methods that served to successfully resolve the foreign policy crisis in Berlin, and only in the final moments of the crisis period did the General's behavior change. Clay did, however, faithfully support the decisions of American leadership in Washington, which ensured that the crisis was resolved without conflict.

After the U.S. President made the decision to remain in Berlin at all costs and put the airlift on a full scale basis on 30 June, General Clay continued to press the issue of breaking the Soviet blockade through the use of military force. By the advanced phase of crisis in mid-July, opposing the views of Marshall and the State Department, in his state of marginal complexity Clay held little hope of a settlement of the Berlin situation by negotiation and became frustrated with the diplomatic process. Clay believed that the time available for a decision was limited because if such a move was not made expediently, the U.S. would have to prepare for a long and patient political struggle which could last for months or longer. The General continued to hold out hope that a prompt American military move would be given authorization to break the blockade against a clock that was counting down. Behaving in accordance with Janis and Mann's flawed pathologies, in the advanced crisis phase, Clay again exercised hypervigilance and advocated U.S. use of force to Washington. In his reply to the U.S. Government in mid-July, Clay reported his conviction, recommending that "if the Soviet blockade continues to not be lifted for alleged technical reasons given by Moscow, then we should advise the Soviet Government that we will move in an armed convoy on a specific date with the requisite bridge equipment to make the way into Berlin usable."<sup>281</sup> Clay adopted this pathology because in reduced complexity he did not believe that it was possible to initiate a search for acceptable alternatives to the diplomatic negotiation process.

Returning to an examination of the flaws of Clay's limited mindset influenced by marginal complexity, throughout the entire crisis period Clay was certain of future Soviet military intentions; nothing could

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<sup>281</sup> Clay to Bradley, 10 July, 1948, in *Clay Papers*, Vol. 2, 733-735; Clay, *Decision in Germany*, 374.

convince him otherwise. Through Janis and Mann's pathology of defensive avoidance in the advanced crisis phase, Clay used selective attention and denial to avoid information that conflicted with his views. When confronted with information on the proceedings of negotiations in conversations with Washington, through a process of wishful thinking Clay believed that Moscow knew that the Allies had no desire for war, and consequently the Soviets would continue to apply pressure just short of the point at which they believed hostilities might occur.<sup>282</sup> In further accordance with Janis and Mann's dysfunctional behavior pathologies, Clay continued employing the defensive avoidance technique of bolstering as he argued against the prospects of serious loss if the U.S. were to commit to breaking the blockade through the use of force. Highlighting how polarized Clay's thinking had become, the American General made it clear that he also fully understood the risk and its implications. In Clay's warped view, "No armed convoy can cross the border without the possibility of trouble but the risk is small that such a convoy would be met by force and trigger conflict."<sup>283</sup> In the advanced crisis phase, Clay continued his flawed reasoning that war could only result from a fixed Soviet plan, not from bellicose Allied actions. Clay was convinced of success using the psychological methods highlighted above and had Moscow met his proposal with similar force resulting in the initiation of a major war, Clay would surely have suffered a dissociative reaction when overwhelmed by information indicating that he had set the United States on a path of foreign policy disaster.

Even though the military balance in Berlin continued to place the U.S. at a tremendous disadvantage against the Soviets, in complexity deficit, Clay once again looked past these critical facts during advanced crisis. This is further evidence of Clay behaving in accordance with Janis and Mann's pathology of defensive avoidance. Of the information available, General Clay only used that which had become comfortable for the purposes of supporting his chosen policy goal of remaining in Berlin at all costs. Clay clearly discounted military information that conflicted with his views and by using selective attention, Clay continued to exhibit dramatic overconfidence in his policy as a form of bolstering, the psychological condition that helps policy makers maintain their expectations of an outcome with high gains and minimal losses. To highlight his biased perspective, on 19 July he stated, "Only America can provide the strength to stop this policy of aggression here and now. I believe determined action will stop it short of war. It cannot be stopped without the serious risk of war."<sup>284</sup>

At the American headquarters in Berlin, Clay's behavior of defensive avoidance continued. As the General continued to bolster his convictions, the planning had been completed and actual preparations for the military force convoy were well underway, making it possible to put the plan into motion immediately. On 19 July, Clay repeated with renewed emotion his advocacy of a show of force: "Unquestionably there is also the traditional reluctance of our own people to take steps which involve the risk of war. However, it does appear

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<sup>282</sup> Clay to Bradley, 10 July, 1948, in *Clay Papers*, Vol. 2, 733-735; Clay, *Decision in Germany*, 374.

<sup>283</sup> *Ibid.*, 374.

<sup>284</sup> *Clay Papers*, Vol. 2, 743-746.

that we cannot do otherwise than retreat with possible fateful consequences to our role as world leader unless we are prepared and without too long a delay to risk a showing of force. It is only by a showing of force which is in the nature of an armed reconnaissance that we can determine the real intent of the Soviet Government.”<sup>285</sup> Clay’s comprehensive analysis of the situation, his definition of the stakes involved, and his forceful advocacy of direct action stood out in sharp contrast opposite the views of Secretary Marshall and his State Department cadre. Due to Clay’s proximity to the problem and high confidence in his views, Truman felt the need for a face-to-face meeting with the American Military Governor and invited him to the meeting of the National Security Council on 22 July.

This was certainly a beneficial idea, as General Clay continued to be influenced by the psychology of groupthink during advanced crisis. Clay’s intransigent behavior trends continued over the duration of the crisis period; surrounded by his group of U.S. subordinates in Berlin, the American Military Governor clearly avoided raising alternative solutions to his original immoderate approach and there was a complete void of novel thinking from his position abroad. Clay’s leadership and “in group” dynamics furthered the illusion of invulnerability that continued to characterize recommendations for Washington and U.S. decisions coming from Germany.<sup>286</sup> Clay persisted to carry himself with impossible certainty during advanced crisis and the U.S. Military Governor significantly overrated his own abilities in decision making.<sup>287</sup> To illustrate, when Clay arrived in Washington on 21 July, other senior decision makers were struck by his optimistic and carefree outlook regarding the foreign policy crisis situation in Germany.<sup>288</sup>

In Clay’s state of decreased complexity, using the numerous psychological methods described above, he had clearly convinced himself of success regardless of the circumstances. Prior to the Security Council meeting, Clay told other members of the Council, “I am confident that we can put an armed convoy through with little difficulty and without creating a crisis.”<sup>289</sup> However, similar to Secretary Marshall and the State Department, the military Joint Chiefs of Staff were extremely conscious of how inadequate the U.S. Armed Forces were postured and they considered the American defense establishment far too weak to enter into a contest against the Red Army.<sup>290</sup>

Even on the final day of advanced crisis, during the 22 July meeting of the National Security Council, Clay told the Council that the abandonment of Berlin would have a disastrous effect on American plans for Western Germany. Clay again highlighted his single dimension thinking and marginal complexity by stating that the Allies should be prepared to go to any lengths to find a solution to the situation, and that they had to remain

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<sup>285</sup> *Clay Papers*, Vol. 2, 743.

<sup>286</sup> Janis, *Victims of Groupthink: a Psychological Study of Foreign Policy Decisions and Fiascoes*, 20.

<sup>287</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

<sup>288</sup> Millis, *The Forrestal Diaries*, 459-460.

<sup>289</sup> *Ibid.*, 459-460.

<sup>290</sup> Murphy, *Diplomat Among Warriors*, 386-388.



in Berlin at any cost. Clay also reported, “The Berlin airlift is no longer a makeshift experiment but a successful and viable operation that can be continued indefinitely.”<sup>291</sup>

As the meeting of the Council progressed however, as Clay’s marginal integrative complexity gradually returned, the General did finally admit that an armed convoy would probably provoke an armed confrontation, whereas the airlift would not. As Clay’s complexity was slowly restored, in the 11<sup>th</sup> hour of the crisis period, Clay finally demonstrated Janis and Mann’s functional behavior pathology of vigilance when he elected to not aggressively pursue permission to test the Russian position by implementing an armed convoy. Only in the final moments of advanced crisis, in the presence of the senior most U.S. decision maker, did Clay soften his approach toward peaceful resolution of the foreign policy crisis in Berlin; nonetheless, he did. Commensurate with a marginal increase of complexity over the course of the crisis period, Clay’s behavior finally exhibited Janis and Mann’s functional path allowing for a viable solution short of war. The next day on his return to Germany, Clay told reporters that he was confident that the airlift could supply Berlin indefinitely and that he saw “an excellent chance for a peaceful settlement” of the Berlin crisis.<sup>292</sup>

In summary, Clay was affected by rigid and distorted information processing through most of the crisis period. The American Military Governor of Berlin remained thoroughly convinced that a show of Allied force to go to the brink of war would convince the Soviet leaders to back down. Clay continuously exhibited Janis and Mann’s dysfunctional behavior pathologies that resulted in extremely risky recommendations and aggressive policy decisions throughout most of the crisis period. Although his behavior drove the initial American response to the Soviet blockade on Berlin, senior leaders in Washington moderated his zeal for conflict during the advanced crisis phase and kept his behavior from directly contributing to an increased risk of conflict as the crisis period drew to a close.

In review of the protracted crisis period, according with Janis and Mann’s functional behavior pathology, the most noteworthy feature of American leadership behavior over time was the Truman Administration’s systematic search and evaluation of alternatives in the presence of stressful decision conditions. Over the length of crisis, as complexity levels steadily increased, information was effectively collected, processed, and productive consultations were held by the Truman Administration. Contrary to the pre-crisis period, the product of this preliminary work was presented to Truman in a structured forum that indicated the available options and likely consequences of each one, calling on the President to make a decision. In the advanced crisis phase, Truman himself actively promoted analytic procedures for choice and the President successfully made strategic decisions based on long-term considerations.

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<sup>291</sup> Minutes of the 16<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the National Security Council, held on Thursday, 22 July, 1948, President’s Secretary File, Harry S. Truman Library.

<sup>292</sup> *New York Times*, 24 July, 1948.

As the crisis period progressed, a number of factors tended to promote careful analytical consideration of the Berlin problem, resulting in vigilant information processing in the highest echelons of the U.S. government. First, from a cognitive perspective, the initial success of the airlift reduced the stress of time pressure. In combination with securing the Democratic nomination for the U.S. Presidential election of 1948, President Truman was able to regain complexity and devote his sole focus of attention to the Berlin problem. Second, reduced stress and increasing cognitive complexity allowed the energetic collection of information, open communications, and an in-depth analysis of alternatives that streamlined the processes to reach clear choices. Third, from a motivational account, although leadership's threat perception of the Soviet Union remained high and the probability of war a strong possibility, even in stressful conditions, increasing cognitive complexity among American leadership allowed them to consider other options. Finally, the decline in overall stress levels, increased complexity and the functionality of behavior inclined the decision makers to contemplate worst case scenarios, understand contingency options, and make better decisions impacting crisis outcome.

The 1943 Berlin crisis presented the Americans with the fundamental question was what exactly should be done because of the Soviet blockade of Berlin. In the presence of stressful decision conditions, increasing complexity prompted the Americans to embark on a comprehensive search of alternatives and produce a firm and unequivocal commitment to stay in Berlin short of conflict. While the U.S. key leaders were caught unprepared in acute crisis when the full blockade was imposed by the Soviets, in difficult conditions they were able to recover sufficient complexity and behavior functionality to solve the foreign policy conflict through peaceful means. Overall, increasing complexity enabled functional behavior that allowed key American decision makers to find a better policy alternative than threatening the use of force, an element characteristic of Truman's defective policy of Soviet containment.

#### CONCLUSIONS – THE RELATIONSHIP OF COGNITIVE COMPLEXITY TO QUALITY OF DECISION MAKING AND OUTCOME

This case effectively demonstrates that as stress increased and complexity declined during the acute phase of the 1948 Berlin crisis period, without exception, Janis and Mann's dysfunctional behavior pathologies were observed in the key American leaders. Under these conditions psychological stress had the consequences of contributing to poor decisions that could have led to major war. However, as stress levels declined and complexity increased from the acute to advanced phase of the Cuba crisis period, Janis and Mann's specified functional behavior was observed that resulted in a peaceful outcome to the Berlin crisis. In these conditions, psychological stress had the consequences of contributing to good decisions.

In summary analysis of this case study, higher psychological stress levels resulted in decreased policy maker performance while decreased stress levels produced an increase in decision maker performance. Taking

these findings into consideration, this case successfully demonstrates the links between decision conditions of stress, policy maker integrative complexity, and subsequent decision making behavior in relation to Janis and Mann's motivational model of conflict decision making. The outcome is beneficial in two ways:

1. The results of this case exhibits that decision maker stress is related to the behavior that Janis and Mann associate with motivated bias.
2. Evaluation of this case additionally serves to illustrate that integrative complexity can be utilized as a functional independent measure of stress. The measured decrements in complexity, when paired with examples of Janis and Mann's dysfunctional behavior patterns, illustrate a useful data point using integrative complexity as an independent measure of stress. Additionally, the measured increases in complexity, when coupled with examples of Janis and Mann's functional behavior pathologies, illustrate another useful data point using integrative complexity an independent measure of stress.

In concert, these data points can be used to construct a functional independent measure of stress utilizing the measure of integrative complexity. An independent measure of decision conditions will be useful in the reformulation of Janis and Mann's crisis model of decision making to circumvent the problem of circularity found within the construct. This will enable political scientists to perform better evaluations of the Janis and Mann conflict model of decision making in the future.

## **CHAPTER 5 – CASE TWO DATA SET**

### **CASE TWO: THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS - MEASURING INTEGRATIVE COMPLEXITY TO DETERMINE STRESS LEVELS**

The main objective of this chapter is to conduct a psychological analysis of major American policymakers who found themselves under increasingly stressful conditions during the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962.

Investigation will focus on determining psychological stress levels of the key American decision makers through the measure of integrative complexity. This chapter will specifically serve to highlight links between decision related stress levels and policy maker cognitive complexity.

The Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 is an unparalleled case study in which to examine decision making conditions of stress and its effect on behavior because it was by far the most significant confrontation between the primary superpowers during the Cold War. The crisis resulted in a dramatic increase in threat perception, time pressure, and probability of devastating nuclear war that brought a marked a rapid increase in psychological stress for American policy makers. In the United States, the Kennedy Administration faced the threat of Soviet missiles in Cuba with no reliable rules or mechanisms in place to guide their approach toward developing a foreign policy to counter their perceived threat. As pressure levels elevated to a perceived all-time high regarding the dangerous nature of nuclear weapons and the burden of decision on policy makers concerning the high stakes of their use, this created unprecedented decision conditions. During an extremely intense crisis period, foreign policy behavior between the Americans and Soviets over a series of military actions could have easily escalated into war. However, acceptable limits of behavior gradually emerged between the Americans and Soviets through foreign policy negotiations. Mutual restraint was established short of hostilities and the threshold between peace and nuclear war was discovered, which fortunately served to guide key policymakers during the crisis. Therefore, the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis is significant not only because of the stressful conditions that the direct superpower confrontation generated, but also because it produced foreign policies that were considered to be a success, resulting in a peaceful outcome during the most significant crisis in the history of the Cold War.

#### **CUBA 1962, PRE-CRISIS PERIOD**

Leading up to the Soviet Union's deployment of strategic nuclear missiles to Cuba, the "pre-crisis period" began in mid-July, 1962, when President John F. Kennedy became increasingly worried about the possibility of a Soviet missile deployment to Cuba. Defining pre-crisis as an action that leads to an increase in threat perception and the sense of need for a foreign policy response, the threat of Russian nuclear missiles within employment range of the United States certainly fulfilled these requirements for U.S. decision makers. Both the perception of threat and the need to deal with it were further heightened by gradually increasing Soviet

deployments of military supplies and personnel to Cuba over the next three months. The pre-crisis period lasted until 15 October, the day before President Kennedy was awakened with the news of the American discovery that Soviet missile sites were under construction in Cuban territory. American knowledge of the deployment of the Soviet Unions' nuclear missiles to Cuba marked the advent of the "crisis" period on 16 October.

The key American decision makers during the pre-crisis period were the United States President John F. Kennedy, U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, and U.S. Secretary of State Dean Rusk. While other officials participated in National Security Council Executive Committee (Ex Comm) meetings and also played a significant part in the decision making process on Cuba (notably U.S. Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy, Director of Central Intelligence John McCone, Ambassador to the United Nations Adlai Stevenson, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Maxwell D. Taylor), President Kennedy, Secretary of Defense McNamara, and Secretary of State Rusk were the key decision makers as their positions within the decision making structure was central, and the influence they imposed upon U.S. policy was fundamental.

For the purposes of conducting a psychological analysis of decision conditions facing these American policy makers during pre-crisis, this study will measure routine operational stress levels through the analysis of policy maker cognitive complexity and then analyze the relationship between higher stress levels and leadership decision making performance. To facilitate this analysis, chosen American decision makers will be studied throughout the pre-crisis period of approximately three months. For the purposes of precision in the conduct of this research, pre-crisis will be defined as the time period between 15 July - 15 October, 1962.

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**ANALYTICAL FRAME – QUESTION ONE**

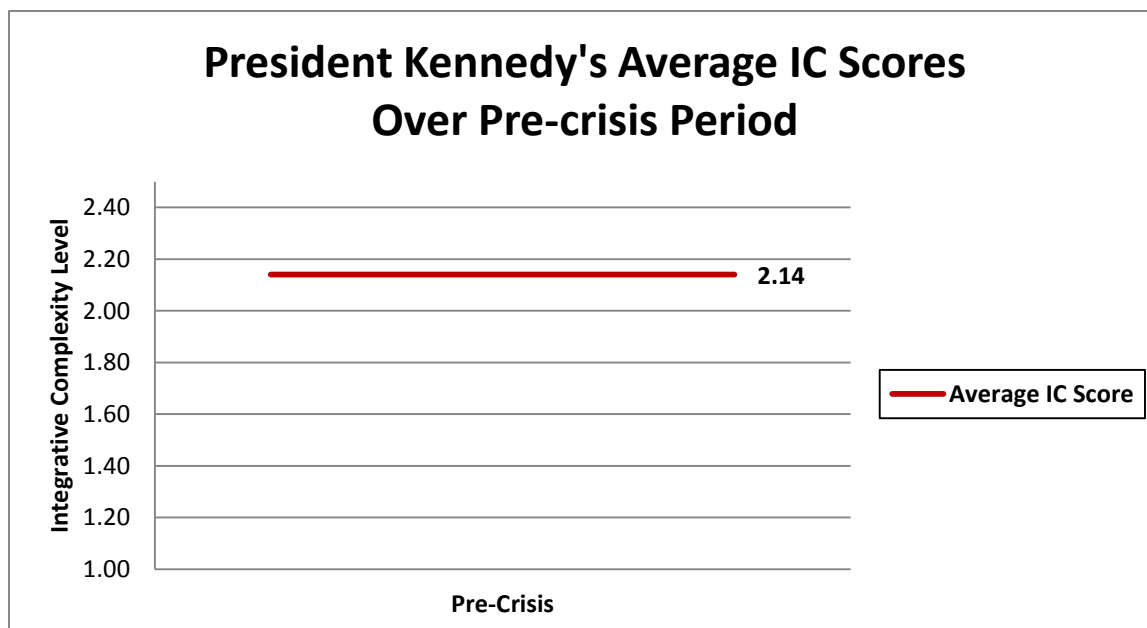
**1. Is pre-crisis cognitive processing complexity in leadership deliberation and decision making considered to be low, moderate, or high? (This analysis will serve to develop a baseline measurement of decision making conditions, pressure, and tension at normal operational levels.)**  
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**INTEGRATIVE COMPLEXITY SCORING OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY IN PRE-CRISIS**

Turning to a psychological analysis of American leadership in the Cuban Missile Crisis, the first central decision maker is U.S. President John F. Kennedy. Beginning with a measure of President Kennedy's cognitive complexity, 30 paragraphs were randomly sampled from public speeches and private statements that the U.S. President made during the time period between 15 July - 15 October, 1962, and coded for integrative

complexity (IC).<sup>293</sup> A large number of paragraphs were randomly selected from a wide variety of speeches and statements that Kennedy made during the pre-crisis time period, specifically to account for the variance in integrative complexity scores that might be generated due to the topic of the speech or the subject of the statement. As an example, if Kennedy gave two speeches in the same day and one was about the U.S. determination to stand up to Soviet aggression, while the other was about the need for international understanding and cooperation between friendly nations regarding issues in Cuba, there might be a large difference in integrative complexity scoring between the two speeches on separate subjects although they occurred only hours apart from each other. If samples were taken from only one speech, scoring would likely present a less accurate picture of Kennedy's mean integrative complexity than if paragraphs were randomly sampled from both speeches. Therefore, taking the mean integrative complexity scores from at least 30 randomly sampled passages of myriad speeches and statements that Kennedy gave during the pre-crisis period, will likely yield a more accurate and stable picture of the President's mean integrative complexity score. For these reasons, this methodology was used for President Kennedy and also in the study of the other key leaders.

In randomly sampling paragraphs from the American President's speeches and statements during the pre-crisis time period, between the independent scoring of three expert integrative complexity coders, Kennedy's mean integrative complexity score was found to be 2.14 on a scale of 7 (see Figure 1).



**Figure 1 - President Kennedy's average IC scores from pre-crisis to the beginning of crisis** <sup>294</sup>

<sup>293</sup> See Appendix B for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.

<sup>294</sup> See Appendix B.

Kennedy's pre-crisis cognitive complexity in leadership deliberation and decision making was found to be between low and low-to-moderate. As President Kennedy began to worry about the perceived Soviet threat during the pre-crisis period, this reading will serve as Kennedy's baseline measurement for decision making conditions of stress, pressure, and tension at normal operational levels. Analysis of Kennedy's average integrative complexity (IC) scores can be summarized by a typical passage that scored at an IC code of 2, or low integrative complexity that is marked by a differentiation of alternatives that is emergent rather than fully developed.

- **Score of 2** – Emergent differentiation of alternatives: "As to whether the United States would intervene in Cuba in order to... at this point, I would think it would be a mistake. We're talking about 60 MIGs, we're talking about some ground-to-air missiles which from the island, which do not threaten the United States. We're not talking about nuclear warheads. We've got a very difficult situation in Berlin. We've got a difficult situation in Southeast Asia and a lot of other places. So that if I were asked, I would say that I could not see, under present conditions, the United States intervening. It would be a major military operation."<sup>295</sup>

The crucial aspect of a score of 2 is the recognition of looking at the same issue in different ways or along different dimensions. However, differentiations at this level are emergent and not fully refined. On average, Kennedy exhibited the expression of emergent alternatives during pre-crisis. The critical indicator for a score of 2 is the potential or conditional acceptance of different perspectives while the author may not explicitly develop the alternative dimension or perspective. In this passage for example, Kennedy clearly recognized multiple perspectives of the problems of the United States abroad, but only developed the single dimension of defensive aspects of the Cuban situation, qualifying for a score of 2.

In general, during pre-crisis the President recognized the potential of both military and diplomatic alternatives as options concerning the U.S. foreign policy solution to the Cuba situation. During the pre-crisis period, President Kennedy's statements and speeches considered military intervention into Cuba to be a poor decision. Other example paragraphs that exhibit President Kennedy's emergent differentiation of alternatives are the following statements:

- **Score of 2** – Emergent differentiation of alternatives: "Clearly the recent acceleration of Soviet military aid to Cuba is coming dangerously close to a violation of the Monroe Doctrine which neither we nor other countries of this hemisphere would tolerate. Let me repeat, however, there is as yet no evidence of organized Soviet forces in Cuba; of military bases

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<sup>295</sup> President John F. Kennedy, "Meeting with Congressional Leadership on Soviet Arms Shipments to Cuba", 04 September, 1962. John F. Kennedy Library. Kennedy met with Congressional leaders to prepare them for his forthcoming public statement on the Soviet weapons buildup in Havana, Cuba deemed by the Americans to be a threat to the Caribbean Region.

provided to Russia; of a violation of the 1934 treaty relating to Guantanamo; of the presence of offensive ground-to-ground missiles; or of other significant offensive capability either in Cuban hands or under Soviet direction and guidance. There is nothing in the Soviet announcement which contemplates such capability."<sup>296</sup>

- **Score of 2** – Emergent differentiation of alternatives: "Perhaps I can make our position more clear by turning the discussion to the problem of a possible nuclear force in the hands of the Chinese Communist authorities. This possibility is one which is of grave concerns, I am confident, to both our Governments. If you could prevent the development of an independent Chinese Communist nuclear force by establishing a multilateral Communist force which could never be used without your consent, I can assure you that we would welcome such a development."<sup>297</sup>
  
- **Score of 2** – Emergent differentiation of alternatives: "There has been a great deal of talk on the situation in Cuba in recent days both in the Communist camp and in our own, and I would like to take this opportunity to set the matter in perspective. In the first place, it is Mr. Castro and his supporters who are in trouble. In the past year, his regime has been increasingly isolated from this hemisphere. His name no longer inspires the same fear or following in other Latin American countries. He has been condemned by the Organization of American States, excluded from the Inter-American Defense Board, and kept out of the Free Trade Association. By his own monumental economic mismanagement, supplemented by our refusal to trade with him, his economy has crumbled, and his pledges for economic progress have been discarded, along with his pledges for political freedom. His industries are stagnating, his harvests are declining, his own followers are beginning to see that their revolution has been betrayed. So it is not surprising that in a frantic effort to bolster his regime he should try to arouse the Cuban people by charges of an imminent American invasion, and commit himself still further to a Soviet take-over in the hope of preventing his own collapse."<sup>298</sup>

## INTEGRATIVE COMPLEXITY SCORING OF DEFENSE SECRETARY MCNAMARA IN PRE-CRISIS

Continuing the psychological analysis of American leadership in the Cuba crisis, the second American leader crucial to U.S. decision making during the pre-crisis phase was Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara.

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<sup>296</sup> President John F. Kennedy, "Presidential Statement on Cuban Policy", 04 September, 1962. John F. Kennedy Library. Kennedy met with members of the press regarding continued Soviet military aid to Havana.

<sup>297</sup> President John F. Kennedy, "Letter to Chairman Khrushchev", 05 September, 1962. John F. Kennedy Library. In early September 1962, Kennedy wrote a letter to Chairman Khrushchev engaging in dialogue concerning the threat of nuclear force.

<sup>298</sup> President John F. Kennedy, "The President's Press Conference", 13 September, 1962. John F. Kennedy Library. Kennedy met with members of the press regarding the situation in Cuba.



Turning to the study of McNamara's cognitive complexity, identical to the integrative complexity methodology executed previously for President Kennedy, 30 paragraphs were randomly sampled from the statements that the U.S. Secretary of Defense gave during the time period between 15 July - 15 October, 1962, and scored for integrative complexity.<sup>299</sup>

In the random sampling of paragraphs from McNamara's speeches and statements during the pre-crisis time period, between three expert integrative complexity coders, the Secretary's mean integrative complexity score was found to be 1.88 on a scale of 7 (see Figure 2).

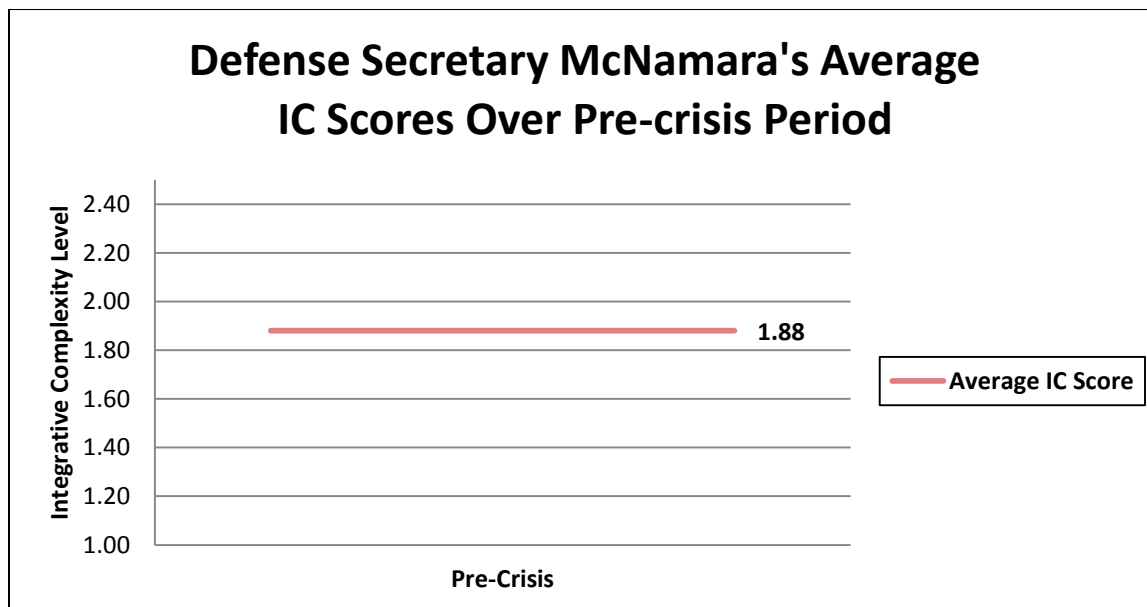


Figure 2 - Secretary McNamara's average IC scores from pre-crisis to the beginning of crisis <sup>300</sup>

McNamara's pre-crisis cognitive complexity in leadership deliberation and decision making was found to be between very low and low. As Secretary McNamara's attention began to be increasingly occupied with Cuba and the Russian threat to the United States during pre-crisis period, this reading will serve as McNamara's baseline measurement for decision making conditions of pressure, stress, and tension at normal operational levels. Analysis of McNamara's average integrative complexity scores can be summarized by a typical passage that scored at an IC code of 2, or low integrative complexity that is characterized by the emergence of a differentiation of alternatives.

- **Score of 2** – Emergent differentiation of alternatives: "Some of the new weapons in Cuba could be used for offensive as well as defensive purposes. MIG fighters can be equipped for ground attack operations and anti-ship missiles can be employed against well-defined land

<sup>299</sup> See Appendix B for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.

<sup>300</sup> See Appendix B.

targets. Indirectly, the presence of SAMs could release some fighter aircraft for ground attack missions. Nevertheless, the pattern of Soviet military aid to date appears clearly designed to strengthen the defenses of the island, thereby protecting the Communist political beachhead in the Western Hemisphere and raising the price the U.S. would have to pay to eliminate it by military action. The overall composition of the Cuban military establishment remains essentially defensive in character; it has not yet been provided with a significant strike capability. Moreover, the Cuban armed forces still lack the air and sealift necessary for military operations on any significant scale in neighboring territories."<sup>301</sup>

The key characteristic of a score of 2 is the acknowledgement of at least two distinct ways of dealing with the same information. However, differentiations at this level are emergent rather than fully developed; this was a defining attribute of McNamara's average integrative complexity levels during pre-crisis. The critical indicator for a score of 2 is the potential or conditional acceptance of different perspectives or dimensions while the author may not explicitly develop the alternative dimension or perspective. In this passage for example, while McNamara demonstrated awareness of two different perspectives for the use of new weapons that were arriving in Cuba, the Secretary only developed the offensive dimension of the weapons and did not expand upon their defensive aspects. McNamara also clearly stated that the acceptance of the new weapons in Cuba as offensive systems was possible, but this possibility hinged on the degree to which a particular condition had been satisfied. McNamara did acknowledge that either dimension was possible however, qualifying for a score of 2. At measured complexity levels during the pre-crisis period, Defense Secretary McNamara did not believe that Cuba's military systems were grounds for U.S. military intervention. In general, the Defense Secretary recognized the potential of looking at the Cuba issue in different ways but did not necessarily view the situation as a threat that required military action.

#### INTEGRATIVE COMPLEXITY SCORING OF SECRETARY RUSK IN PRE-CRISIS

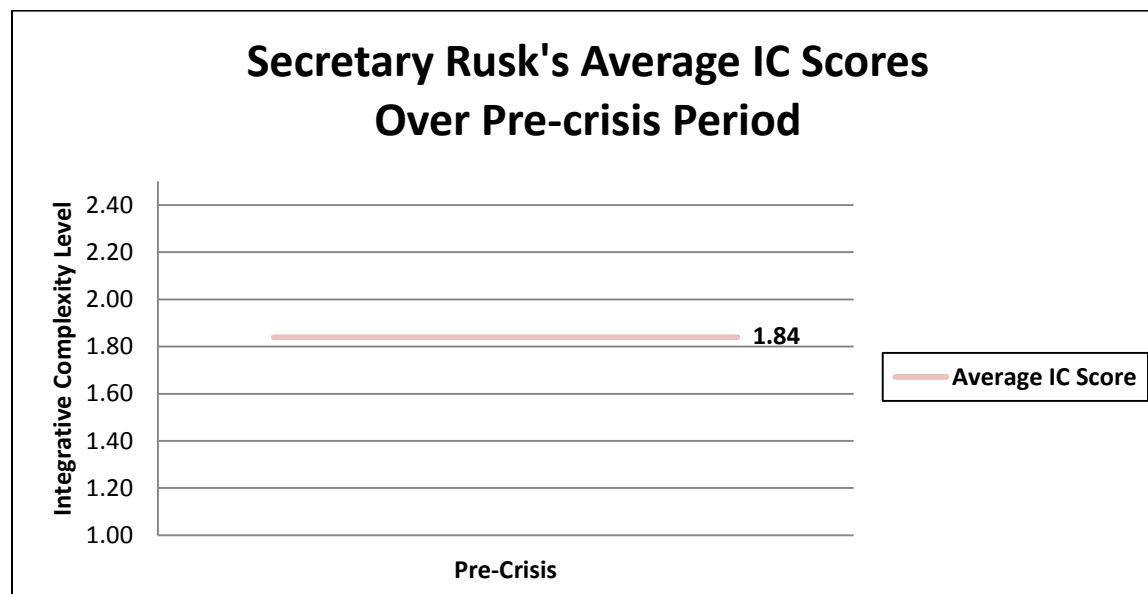
Continuing the psychological study of American leadership in the Cuba crisis, the final American decision maker key to the formulation and implementation of American policy was Secretary of State Dean Rusk. Turning to the study of Secretary Rusk's cognitive complexity, identical to the integrative complexity methodology executed for Kennedy and McNamara, 30 paragraphs were randomly sampled from all of the speeches that the American Secretary of State gave during the time period between 15 July - 15 October, 1962, and scored for integrative complexity.<sup>302</sup>

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<sup>301</sup> Defense Secretary McNamara, *Special National Intelligence Estimate*, Para. 20, Foreign Relations of the United States, September 1962, Volume X, Cuba.

<sup>302</sup> See Appendix B for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.

In randomly sampling paragraphs from the Secretary of State's speeches and statements made during the pre-crisis time period, between three expert integrative complexity coders, Rusk's mean integrative complexity score was found to be a 1.84 on a scale of 7 (see Figure 3).



**Figure 3 – Secretary Rusk's average IC scores from pre-crisis to the beginning of crisis** <sup>303</sup>

Rusk's pre-crisis cognitive complexity in leadership deliberation and decision making was found to be between very low and low. As Secretary Rusk became increasingly worried about the Russian threat during pre-crisis period, this reading will serve as Rusk's baseline measurement for decision making conditions of stress and pressure at normal operational levels. Analysis of Rusk's average integrative complexity scores can be summarized by a typical passage that scored at an IC code of 2, or low integrative complexity that is highlighted by emerging alternatives rather than their full development.

- **Score of 2** – Emergent differentiation of alternatives: "I made clear that the US is not prepared to accept Cuban situation as permanent. Although military action remains an eventual possibility, we must think of ways to solve problem without recourse to arms. Objective should be actions which increasingly isolate Cuba so as make abundantly clear to Soviets Cuba is unprofitable enterprise for them, either in itself or as basis for Communist penetration."<sup>304</sup>

<sup>303</sup> See Appendix B for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.

<sup>304</sup> Telegram from Secretary of State Rusk to the Department of State, 26 September, 1962, *Rusk Papers*.

The crucial aspect of a score of 2 is the recognition of looking at the same issue in different ways or along different dimensions. However, differentiations at this level are incipient rather than fully developed. On average, Rusk exhibited an emergent understanding of alternatives during pre-crisis. In this passage for example, Rusk discussed the American understanding that although the Cuba situation was not acceptable, multiple alternatives were available as a solution to the problem. The critical indicator for a score of 2 is the potential or conditional acceptance of different perspectives or dimensions while the author may not explicitly develop the alternative dimension or perspective. In this statement for example, Rusk clearly stated his awareness of alternative futures based on U.S. retaliatory actions but did not explicitly expound on the degree of retaliatory measures considered to be satisfactory. Thus, these characteristics are sufficient evidence to merit a score of 2. In general, the Secretary of State recognized the potential of both military and diplomatic alternatives as options concerning the U.S. foreign policy solution to the Cuba situation. Of note, during the pre-crisis period, Secretary Rusk considered military intervention into Cuba to be a poor solution to the American problem.

#### CUBA 1962, CRISIS PERIOD

In mid-October 1962, American airborne surveillance discovered that Soviet missile sites were under construction in Cuban territory. When President Kennedy was informed of the news on the morning of 16 October, 1962, the incident marked the beginning of the “crisis period.” This Soviet action created all three conditions necessary to meet the definition of crisis for the decision makers in the United States: a sharp rise in threat perception, an awareness of time constraints on decisions, and a higher probability of war. The period of crisis continued until 28 October, when an agreement was reached between Washington and Moscow that the Soviets would publicly remove their offensive ballistic missiles in Cuba and return them to the Soviet Union in exchange for an American agreement that the United States would not invade Cuba. As a result, time pressure declined in intensity, marking the beginning of the post-crisis period until the proposed agreement was executed to conclude the foreign policy conflict.

The key decision makers during the Cuban crisis period remained the same as those of the pre-crisis period: President Kennedy, Secretary of Defense McNamara, and Secretary of State Rusk. During the crisis period, time constraints and the probability of war brought the President to the center of the policymaking arena in his leadership role during the Ex Comm meetings. As in the pre-crisis period, although a number of other decision makers participated in the decision process (specifically U.S. Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy, Director of Central Intelligence John McCone, Ambassador to the United Nations Adlai Stevenson, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Maxwell D. Taylor), Kennedy, McNamara, and Rusk were the central figures that decided the American response to the Soviet missiles in Cuba.

As we have now developed a baseline understanding of key leadership through the evaluation their routine psychological stress levels using cognitive complexity during pre-crisis, this section will evaluate cognitive complexity during the crisis period in a time phased approach. To facilitate this analysis, chosen American decision makers will first be examined in the beginning or acute phase of crisis and then again at the end or advanced phase of the crisis period. For the purposes of clarity in the conduct of analysis, the acute phase of crisis will be defined as the time period between 16-22 October, 1968, while the advanced phase of crisis will be identified as the time period between 23-28 October, 1962.

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## **ANALYTICAL FRAME – QUESTION TWO**

**2. Is cognitive processing complexity in leadership deliberation and decision making during the acute phase of crisis considered to be low, moderate, or high? (The measurement of cognitive complexity during the acute stage of crisis can be comparatively analyzed in relationship to pre-crisis cognitive complexity levels for the purposes of evaluating change.)**

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### **INTEGRATIVE COMPLEXITY SCORING OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY IN ACUTE CRISIS**

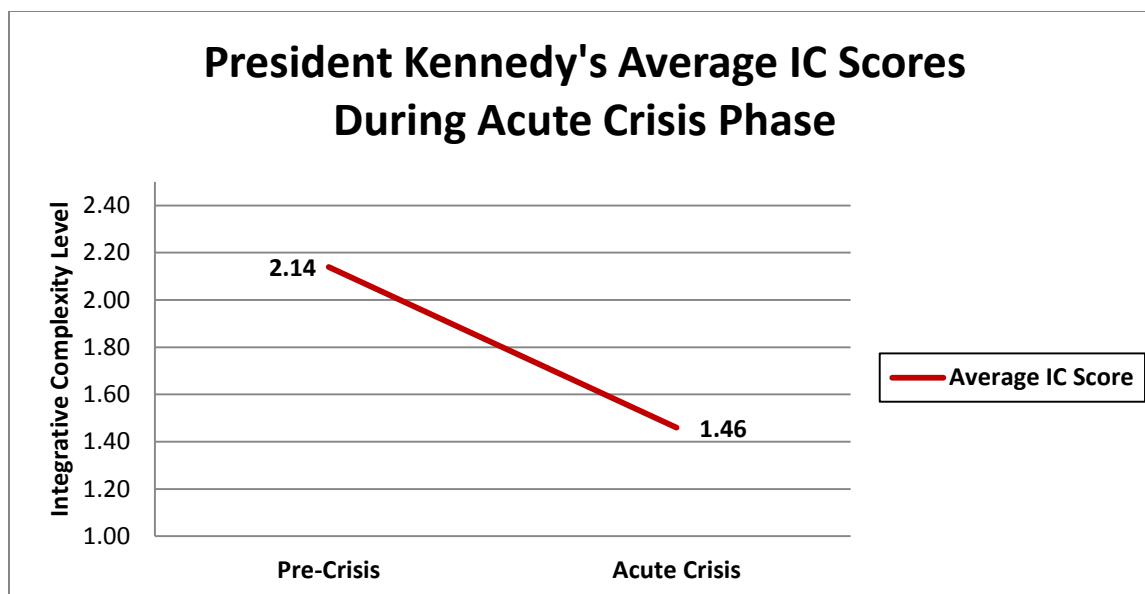
Returning to the study of Kennedy's cognitive complexity, 30 additional paragraphs were randomly selected from speeches and statements that the American President made during the acute phase of the crisis period, the time between 16-22 October, 1962, and scored for integrative complexity.<sup>305</sup>

In the random sampling of paragraphs from the statements that the President made during acute crisis, between three expert integrative complexity coders, President Kennedy's mean integrative complexity score was found to be 1.46 on a scale of 7.<sup>306</sup> The measure of Kennedy's cognitive complexity during acute crisis in leadership deliberation and decision making was found to be between very low and low. When compared with the President's baseline measurement of decision making conditions of pressure and tension at normal operational levels, in acute crisis, Kennedy's integrative complexity declined from 2.14 to 1.46 (see Figure 4).

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<sup>305</sup> See Appendix B for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.

<sup>306</sup> See Appendix B.



**Figure 4 - President Kennedy's decrease in IC scores during acute crisis** <sup>307</sup>

At the onset of acute crisis, President Kennedy's stress levels increased dramatically and contributed to a marked decline in complexity when compared to the President's decision making conditions of pressure, stress, and tension at normal operational levels. Interestingly, although Kennedy was normally eloquent at routine complexity levels, with the rapid rise in pressure his statements generally became much shorter in length and his normal conversations were characterized by clipped sentences. The following example of Kennedy's curtailed expression when briefed on the existence of Soviet MRBMs in Cuba illustrates that he could scarcely speak.

- **Score of 1** – Single, undifferentiated perspective: "He can't do this to me!"<sup>308</sup>

When the President was more expansive as the acute crisis phase progressed, analysis of Kennedy's average integrative complexity scores can be summarized by a typical passage that scored at an IC code of 1, or very low integrative complexity. This cognitive complexity level is characterized by a lack of development or differentiation of alternatives.

- **Score of 1** – Single, undifferentiated perspective: "'Yeah, but I, I think the only thing is the, the, uh, chances of it becoming a much broader struggle are increased as you step up the, uh... Talk about the dangers to the United States, uh... once you get into, uh, beginning to shoot up those airports, then you get in, you get a lot of anti-aircraft, and you got a lot of, I

<sup>307</sup> See Appendix B for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.

<sup>308</sup> President John F. Kennedy, "Response when briefed on evidence of Soviet missile sites being constructed on Cuban territory", 16 October, 1962. President's Secretary's Files, John F. Kennedy Library.

mean you're running a much more major operation, therefore the dangers of the world wide effects are substantial to the United States are increased. That's the only argument for it. I quite agree that the, if we're just thinking about Cuba, the best thing to do is to be bold if you're thinking about trying to get this thing under some degree of, uh, control.<sup>309</sup>

The crucial aspect of a score of 1 is the reliance, without qualification, on a simple, one dimensional rule for interpreting events or making choices. As such, only one way of looking at the world is considered legitimate with little or no room for ambiguity or shades of grey. The critical indicator for a score of 1 is the lack of evidence of different perspectives or dimensions while the author maintains only one perspective of the situation. In the above passage for example, although Kennedy described military action in Cuba that would lead to escalation with the Soviets, he believed in a kinetic course of action and failed to consider other alternatives. Thus, this characteristic is sufficient to merit a score of 1.

Although Kennedy's pre-crisis statements were typically characteristic of emergent differentiation of stimuli under normal operating conditions, in acute crisis, the President generally failed to recognize emerging dimensions and limited his expanding communication to a single perspective, that of military action. Other example paragraphs that exhibit President Kennedy's undifferentiated perspective during Ex Comm meetings are the following extracts:

- **Score of 1** – Single, undifferentiated perspective: "Oh I... oh, I understand that. We'll be talking about... Say, say we're going to move on a Saturday and we would say on Friday that these MRBMs, that the existence of this presents the gravest threat to our security and that appropriate action must be taken."<sup>310</sup>
- **Score of 1** – Single, undifferentiated perspective: "Within the past week, unmistakable evidence has established the fact that a series of offensive missile sites is now in preparation on that imprisoned island. The purpose of these bases can be none other than to provide a nuclear strike capability against the Western Hemisphere. Any missile launched from Cuba will be considered to have originated from the Soviet Union and will require a full retaliatory response upon the USSR. We will not prematurely or unnecessarily risk the costs of worldwide nuclear war in which even the fruits of victory would be ashes in our mouth, neither will we shrink from that risk at any time it must be faced."<sup>311</sup>

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<sup>309</sup> President John F. Kennedy's response when briefed on evidence of Soviet missile sites being constructed on Cuban territory, 16 October, 1962. John F. Kennedy Library.

<sup>310</sup> White House Tapes, "Transcripts of Ex Comm Meeting of 16 October, 1962, 11:50-12:57", John F. Kennedy Library, mimeograph.

<sup>311</sup> Ibid.

- **Score of 1** – Single, undifferentiated perspective: “Uh, eh, well, this, which... What you're really talking about are two or three different, uh, tense operations. One is the strike just on this, these three bases. One, the second is the broader one that Secretary McNamara was talking about, which is on the airfields and on the SAM sites and on anything else connected with, uh, missiles. Third is doing both of those things and also at the same time launching a blockade, which requires really the, uh, the, uh, third and which is a larger step. And then, as I take it, the fourth question is the, uh, degree of consultation.”<sup>312</sup>

#### INTEGRATIVE COMPLEXITY SCORING OF DEFENSE SECRETARY MCNAMARA IN ACUTE CRISIS

Continuing with the study of Defense Secretary McNamara and his cognitive complexity, at the onset of crisis, 30 additional paragraphs were randomly selected from speeches and statements that the Secretary of Defense made during the time period between 16-22 October, 1962, and coded for integrative complexity.<sup>313</sup>

During the time period of acute crisis, Defense Secretary McNamara's mean integrative complexity score was found to be a 1.21 on a scale of 7.<sup>314</sup> The measure of McNamara's cognitive complexity during acute crisis in leadership deliberation and decision making was found to be between very low and low. When compared with the Defense Secretary's baseline measurement of decision making conditions of pressure and tension at normal operational levels, in acute crisis, McNamara's integrative complexity declined from 1.88 to 1.21 (see Figure 5). As acute crisis set in, Defense Secretary McNamara's stress levels increased dramatically and contributed to a distinct decline in complexity when compared to his decision making conditions at normal operational levels.

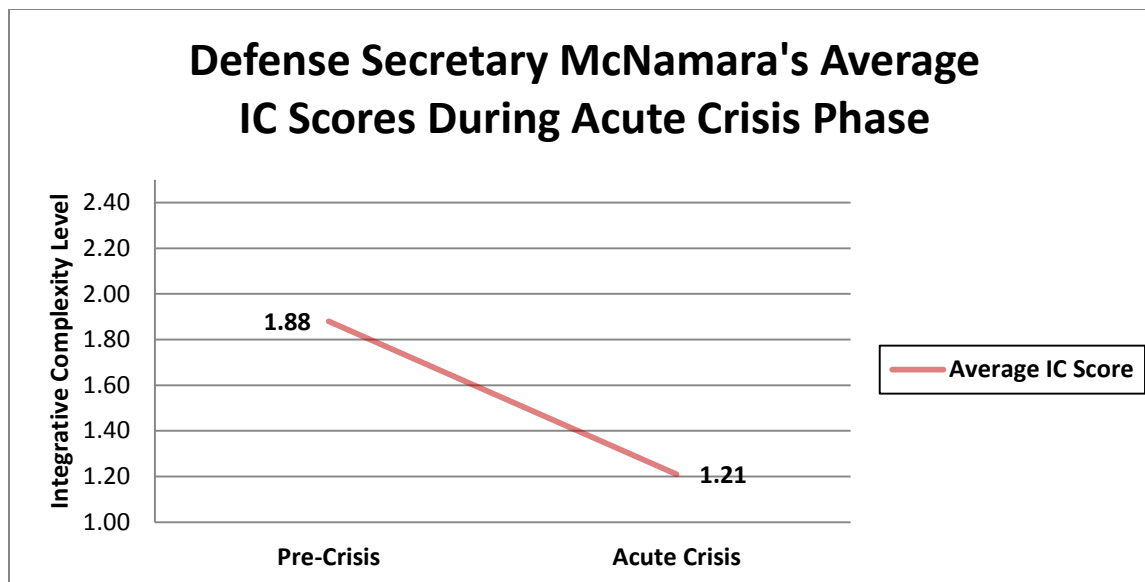
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<sup>312</sup> White House Tapes, “Transcripts of Ex Comm Meeting of 16 October, 1962, 11:50-12:57”, John F. Kennedy Library, mimeograph.

<sup>313</sup> See Appendix B for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.

<sup>314</sup> See Appendix B.





**Figure 5 - Secretary McNamara's decrease in IC scores during acute crisis** <sup>315</sup>

Much like President Kennedy, McNamara was normally descriptively detailed at routine complexity levels, but with the rapid rise of stressful decision conditions, his statements generally became increasingly brief. The following example illustrates McNamara's curtailed response when discussing strike planning options vis-à-vis Cuba.

- **Score of 1** – Single, undifferentiated perspective: “Well, you can go from the three missile sites to the three missile sites plus the MIGs, to the three missile sites plus MIGs plus nuclear storage plus airfields and so on up through the offensive, potential offensive strike list.”<sup>316</sup>

Analysis of McNamara's average integrative complexity scores during acute crisis can be summarized by a typical passage that scored at an IC code of 1, or very low integrative complexity that is marked by a lack of development or differentiation of alternatives.

- **Score of 1** – Single, undifferentiated perspective: “Yes, Mr. President. Uh, General Taylor has just been with the Chiefs, and the unified commanders went through this, uh, in detail. Uh, to take out only the missiles, uh, or to take out the missiles and the MIG aircraft and the associated nuclear storage facilities if we locate them, uh, could be done in twenty-four-hours' warning. That is to say, twenty-four hours between the time of decision and the time of strike, uh, starting with a decision no later than, no earlier than this coming Friday and with the strike therefore on Saturday, or anytime thereafter with twenty-four hours between

<sup>315</sup> See Appendix B for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.

<sup>316</sup> White House Tapes, “Transcripts of Ex Comm Meeting of 16 October, 1962, 11:50-12:57”, John F. Kennedy Library, mimeograph.

the decision and time of strike. Uh, General Taylor will wish to comment on this, but the Chiefs are strong in their recommendation against that kind of an attack, believing that it would leave, uh, too great a capability in Cuba undestroyed. The specific number of sorties required to, to accomplish this end has not been worked out in detail. The capability is for something in excess of seven hundred sorties per day. Uh, it seems highly unlikely that that number would be required to carry out that limited an objective, but at least that capability is available in the air force alone, and the navy sorties would rise on top of that number. The Chiefs have also considered other alternatives extending into the full invasion, uh, you may wish to discuss later.<sup>317</sup>

The crucial aspect of a score of 1 is the reliance, without qualification, on a simple, one dimensional rule for interpreting events or making choices. As such, only one way of looking at the world is considered legitimate with little or no room for ambiguity. The critical indicator for a score of 1 is the lack of evidence of different perspectives or dimensions while the author maintains only one perspective of the situation. In this passage for example, although McNamara described U.S. military action in Cuba in operational detail, he failed to consider other non-military alternatives to achieve the same American objectives. Thus, this characteristic is sufficient to merit a score of 1. Although McNamara's statements were typically characteristic of emergent differentiation of stimuli under normal operating conditions during pre-crisis, in acute crisis, much like President Kennedy, the U.S. Defense Secretary generally failed to recognize emerging dimensions and limited his expanding communication to a single perspective focused on military action.

#### INTEGRATIVE COMPLEXITY SCORING OF SECRETARY RUSK IN ACUTE CRISIS

Continuing the study of Secretary Rusk's cognitive complexity, 30 additional paragraphs were randomly selected from speeches and statements that the U.S. Secretary of State gave during the time period between 16-22 October, 1962, and scored for integrative complexity.<sup>318</sup>

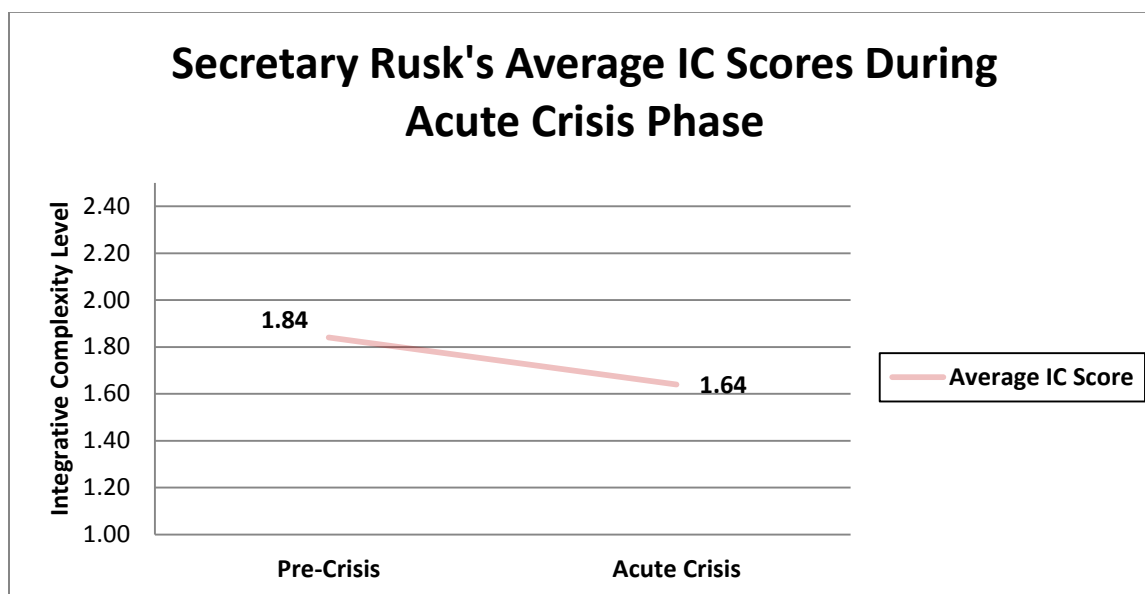
In the random sampling of paragraphs from the statements that Secretary Rusk made during the time period of acute crisis, between three expert integrative complexity coders, Rusk's mean integrative complexity score was found to be 1.64 on a scale of 7.<sup>319</sup> Rusk's acute crisis cognitive complexity in leadership deliberation and decision making was found to be between very low and low. When compared with the Secretary of State's baseline measurement of decision making conditions of pressure and tension at normal operational levels, in acute crisis, Rusk's integrative complexity declined from 1.84 to 1.64 (see Figure 6).

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<sup>317</sup> Robert McNamara, Presidential Recordings, Transcript of the Meetings of the Ex Comm, Tape 28A Reel 2 – No classification markings, published in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961-1963, vol. XI: Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath*, (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of State, 1996), 49-93.

<sup>318</sup> See Appendix B for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.

<sup>319</sup> See Appendix B.



**Figure 6 – Secretary Rusk’s decrease in IC scores during acute crisis** <sup>320</sup>

At the onset of acute crisis, Secretary Rusk’s stress levels increased and contributed to a distinct decline in complexity when compared to his decision making conditions at normal operational levels. Rusk, who was routinely exacting and curtailed in prose, became increasingly succinct in parallel with the rapid rise of stressful decision conditions.

- **Score of 1** – Emergent differentiation of alternatives: “I would not think that they would use a nuclear weapon unless they're prepared to join a nuclear war, I don't think. I just don't see, don't... don't see that possibility.”<sup>321</sup>

Analysis of Rusk’s average integrative complexity scores during acute crisis can be summarized by a typical passage that scored at an IC code of 2, or low integrative complexity that is highlighted by an emergent rather than a fully developed differentiation of alternatives.

- **Score of 2** – Emergent differentiation of alternatives: “The air strike option is chapter two. We should not initiate such a strike now because of the risk of escalating actions leading to general war. I doubt that we should act without consultation of our allies. A sudden air strike had no support in the law or morality, and, therefore, must be ruled out. We start the

<sup>320</sup> See Appendix B for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.

<sup>321</sup> White House Tapes, “Transcripts of Ex Comm Meeting of 16 October, 1962, 11:50-12:57”, John F. Kennedy Library, mimeograph.

blockade and only go on to an air attack when we know the reaction of the Russians and of our allies."<sup>322</sup>

The crucial aspect of a score of 2 is the recognition of looking at the same issue in different ways or along different dimensions. However, differentiations at this level are emergent rather than fully developed. On average, during acute crisis, Rusk exhibited an emergent understanding of alternatives. To illustrate, in this passage Rusk clearly differentiated between U.S. alternative solutions to the Cuba problem. The critical indicator for a score of 2 is the potential or conditional acceptance of different perspectives or dimensions while the author may not explicitly develop the alternative dimension or perspective. In this example, Rusk clearly stated his awareness of potential escalation regarding the air strike option but did not demonstrate awareness that a U.S. maritime blockade was a military action that could also result in escalation, similar to overt strikes. Thus, these characteristics are sufficient evidence to merit a score of 2. In general, as pre-crisis gave way to acute crisis, the Secretary of State only recognized courses of military action as acceptable alternatives to the U.S. foreign policy crisis in Cuba.

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## **ANALYTICAL FRAME – QUESTION TWO**

**2. Is cognitive processing complexity in leadership deliberation and decision making during the advanced phase of crisis considered to be low, moderate, or high? (The measurement of cognitive complexity during the advanced stage of crisis can be comparatively analyzed in relationship to pre-crisis and acute crisis cognitive complexity levels for the purposes of evaluating change.)**

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## **INTEGRATIVE COMPLEXITY SCORING OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY IN ADVANCED CRISIS**

Returning to the study of Kennedy's cognitive complexity, 30 additional paragraphs were randomly selected from the speeches and statements that the American President made during the advanced phase of the crisis period, the time between 23-28 October, 1962. These passages were scored for integrative complexity.<sup>323</sup>

In the random sampling of paragraphs from the statements that the President made during the advanced phase of crisis, between three expert integrative complexity coders, President Kennedy's mean integrative complexity score was found to be 1.91 on a scale of 7.<sup>324</sup> Although the measure of Kennedy's cognitive complexity during advanced crisis in leadership deliberation and decision making was found to remain

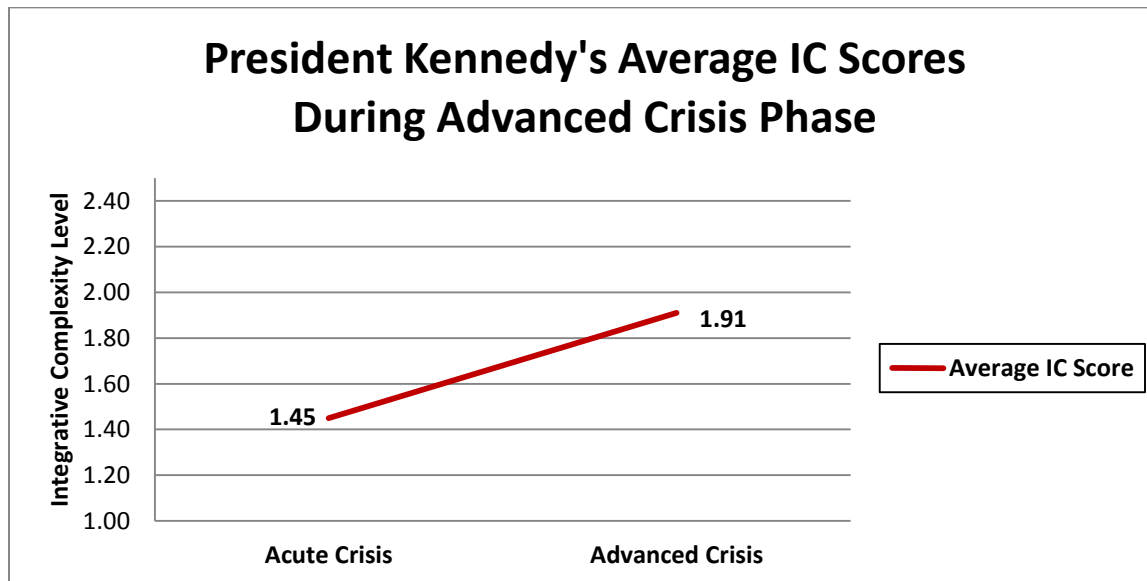
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<sup>322</sup> Dean Rusk, Presidential Recordings, 505th Meeting of the National Security Council, 20 October, 1962, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961-1963, vol. XI: Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath*, (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of State, 1996), 49-93.

<sup>323</sup> See Appendix B for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.

<sup>324</sup> See Appendix B.

between very low and low, when compared with the President's integrative complexity measurement during acute crisis, Kennedy's integrative complexity was found to have increased from 1.45 to 1.91 (see Figure 7). During the advanced crisis phase, President Kennedy's stress levels remained high but were accompanied by a notable increase in complexity when compared to the President's decision making conditions of pressure and tension at the levels measured during acute crisis.



**Figure 7 - President Kennedy's increase in IC scores between acute and advanced crisis phases** <sup>325</sup>

Analysis of Kennedy's average integrative complexity scores can be summarized by a typical passage that scored at an IC code of 2 (the closest whole number score to his scoring of 1.91), or low integrative complexity that is highlighted by an emergent differentiation of alternatives.

- **Score of 2** – Emergence of differentiated alternatives: "Yes, but I should say that also, as the situation is moving, if we don't for the next twenty-four or forty eight hours, this trade has appeal. Now if we reject it out of hand and then have to take military action against Cuba, then we also face a decline. Now the only thing we've got for which I would think we'd be able to hold general support would be - well let's try to word it so that we don't harm NATO - but the thing that I think everybody would agree to - while these matters, which are complicated, are discussed, there should be a cessation of work. Then I think we can hold general support for that. If they don't agree to that, the Soviet Union, then we retain the initiative."<sup>326</sup>

<sup>325</sup> See Appendix B for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.

<sup>326</sup> Bundy, M., Blight, J.G., "Transcripts of the Meetings of the Ex Comm: 27 October 1962", *International Security*, vol. 12, No. 3, Winter, 1987-1988, 50.

The crucial aspect of a score of 2 is the recognition of looking at the same issue along different dimensions but differentiations at this level are emergent and not fully developed. In this passage for example, Kennedy discussed multiple alternatives concerning the development of a solution to the crisis situation in Cuba. The critical indicator for a score of 2, however, is the potential or conditional acceptance of different perspectives or dimensions while the author may not explicitly develop the alternative dimension or perspective. In this example, Kennedy expressed the possibility of a missile trade as a compromise with the Soviets, while also expressing that military action would lead to undesirable circumstances, simultaneous perspectives that the President had not been able to distinguish separately during acute crisis. These particular characteristics justify a score of 2.

Even though Kennedy's average IC scores were characterized by fewer emergent perspectives during the onset of acute crisis, as his complexity improved, in advanced crisis his performance increasingly captured the emergence of separate dimensions. Other example paragraphs that exhibit President Kennedy's emergent differentiation of alternatives during advanced crisis are as follows:

- **Score of 2** – Emergence of differentiated alternatives: “Well now that's just what we ought to be thinking about. We're going to be in an insupportable position on this matter if this becomes his proposal. In the first place, we last year tried to get the missiles out of there because they're not militarily useful, number one. Number two, it's going to-to any man at the United Nations or any other rational man it will look like a very fair trade.”<sup>327</sup>
- **Score of 2** – Emergence of differentiated alternatives: “Now let's uh, I would think the first thing we have to do is to - as I say, rather than get into the details. The fact that work is going on is the one defensible public position we've got. They've got a very good card. This one is going to be very tough, I think for us. It's going to be tough in England, I'm sure - as well as other places on the continent. We're going to be forced to take action that might seem, in my opinion, not a blank check but a pretty good check to take action in Berlin on the grounds that we were wholly unreasonable. Most think... people think that if you're allowed an even trade, you ought to take advantage of it. Therefore it makes it much more difficult for us to move with world support. These are all the things that uh, why this is a pretty good play of his. That uh, being so uh, I think that we - the only thing we've got him on is the fact that now they've put forward varying proposals in short periods of time, all of which are complicated, and under that shield this work goes on. Until we can get some un-agreement

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<sup>327</sup> Bundy, M., Blight, J.G., “Transcripts of the Meetings of the Ex Comm: 27 October 1962”, *International Security*, vol. 12, No. 3, Winter, 1987-1988, 50.

on the cessation of work, how can we possibly negotiate with proposals coming as fast as the wires can carry them?<sup>328</sup>

- **Score of 2** – Emergence of differentiated alternatives: “That's why I think we ought to get to that. I think what we ought to do is not worry so much about the cover, do the reconnaissance tomorrow. If we get fired on, then we meet here, and we decide whether we do a much more general... announce that the work is going ahead, announce that we haven't got an answer from the Soviets, and then we decide that we're going to do a much more general one than just shooting up some gun down there.”<sup>329</sup>

#### INTEGRATIVE COMPLEXITY SCORING OF DEFENSE SECRETARY MCNAMARA IN ADVANCED CRISIS

Returning to the study of McNamara's cognitive complexity, 30 additional paragraphs were again randomly selected from the speeches and statements that the U.S. Secretary of Defense made during the advanced phase of the crisis period, the time between 23-28 October, 1962. These passages were scored for integrative complexity.<sup>330</sup>

In the random sampling of paragraphs from the statements that McNamara made during the advanced phase of crisis, between three expert integrative complexity coders, Defense Secretary McNamara's mean integrative complexity score was found to be a 1.74 on a scale of 7.<sup>331</sup> The measure of McNamara's cognitive complexity during advanced crisis in leadership deliberation and decision making was found to be very low to low, but when compared with the Defense Secretary's integrative complexity measurement during acute crisis, McNamara's integrative complexity was found to have increased from 1.21 to 1.74 (see Figure 8).

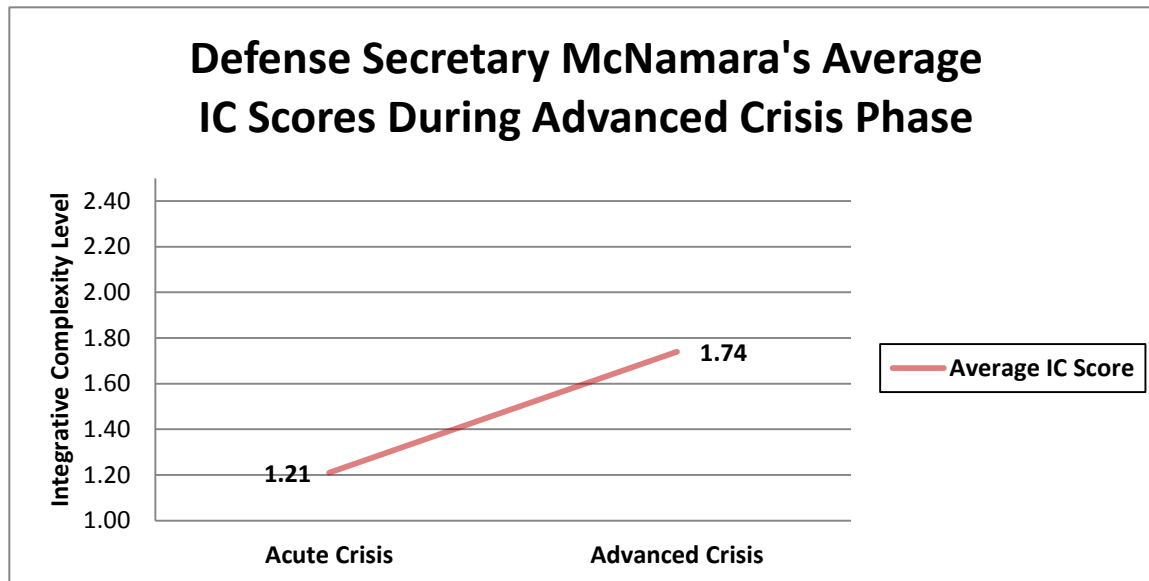
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<sup>328</sup> Bundy, M., Blight, J.G., “Transcripts of the Meetings of the Ex Comm: 27 October 1962”, *International Security*, vol. 12, No. 3, Winter, 1987-1988, 50.

<sup>329</sup> *Ibid.*, 50.

<sup>330</sup> See Appendix B for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.

<sup>331</sup> See Appendix B.



**Figure 8 - Secretary McNamara's increase in IC scores between acute and advanced crisis phases** <sup>332</sup>

During the advanced crisis phase, Secretary McNamara's stress levels declined for myriad reasons and contributed to a notable increase in complexity when compared to the U.S. Defense Secretary's decision making conditions of pressure and tension at the levels measured during acute crisis. Analysis of McNamara's average integrative complexity scores can be summarized by a typical passage that scored at an IC code of 2 (the closest whole number score to his scoring of 1.74), or low integrative complexity that is characterized by an emergent differentiation of alternatives.

- **Score of 2** – Emergent differentiation of alternatives: “Well, I think that we can assume that that kind of an approach will be made - I think we can assume an approach to trade the missiles will be made one way or another. He'll know that. But now let's assume that that's made and time goes by and nothing happens and we're losing airplanes. What, what do we do there?”<sup>333</sup>

The crucial aspect of a score of 2 is the recognition of looking at the same issue along different dimensions but differentiations are emergent rather than fully developed. To illustrate, in the above example McNamara acknowledged the alternative possibility of compromise to trade missiles as part of the U.S. foreign policy solution. The critical factor for a score of 2 is the potential or conditional acceptance of different perspectives or dimensions while the author may not explicitly develop the alternative dimension or perspective. In this passage, McNamara clearly demonstrated an emergent differentiation of alternatives along with recognition of alternative futures other than military action, thus justifying a score of 2. While McNamara's IC

<sup>332</sup> See Appendix B for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.

<sup>333</sup> Bundy and Blight, “Transcripts of the Meetings of the Ex Comm: 27 October 1962”, *International Security*, 79.

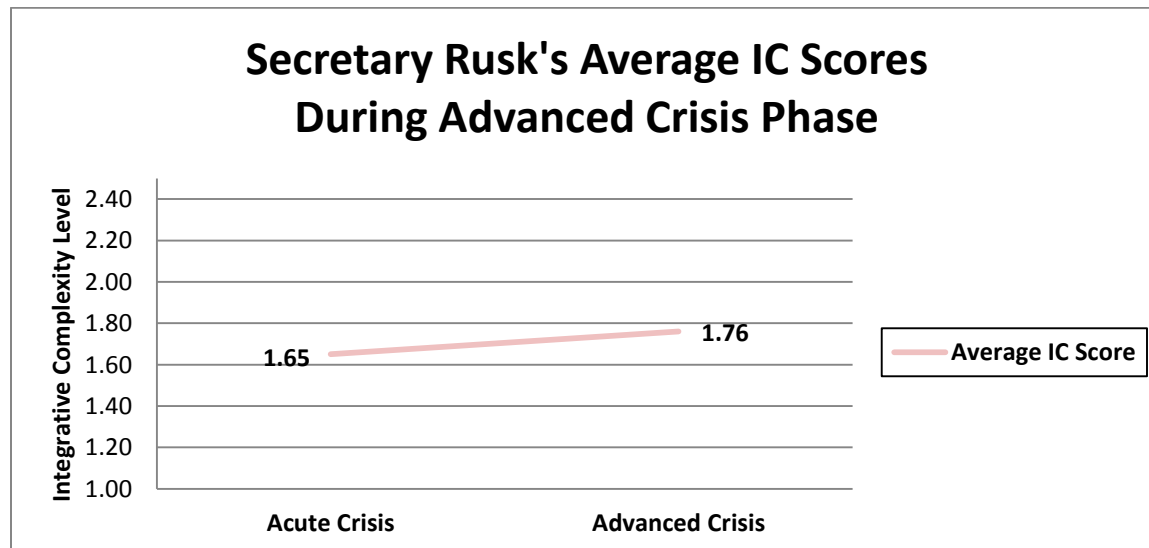


performance in acute crisis was generally characterized by single dimension complexity, during advanced crisis, with increasing complexity the Defense Secretary characterized other emerging dimensions of concessions as potential solutions to the U.S. foreign policy crisis.

#### INTEGRATIVE COMPLEXITY SCORING OF SECRETARY RUSK IN ADVANCED CRISIS

Returning to the study of Secretary Rusk's cognitive complexity, 30 additional paragraphs were again randomly selected from the speeches and statements that the U.S. Secretary of State made during the advanced phase of the crisis period, the time between 23-28 October, 1962. These passages were scored for integrative complexity.<sup>334</sup>

In the random sampling of paragraphs from the statements that Rusk made during the advanced phase of crisis, between three expert integrative complexity coders, Secretary Rusk's mean integrative complexity score was found to be 1.76 on a scale of 7.<sup>335</sup> The measure of Rusk's cognitive complexity during advanced crisis in leadership deliberation and decision making was found to be between very low and low. When compared with his integrative complexity measurement during acute crisis, Rusk's integrative complexity was found to have increased from 1.65 to 1.76. During the advanced crisis phase, Secretary Rusk's stress levels declined and contributed to a slight increase in complexity when compared to the U.S. Secretary of State's decision making conditions of pressure and tension at the levels measured during acute crisis (see Figure 9).



**Figure 9 – Secretary Rusk's increase in IC scores between acute and advanced crisis phases** <sup>336</sup>

<sup>334</sup> See Appendix B for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.

<sup>335</sup> See Appendix B.

<sup>336</sup> See Appendix B for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.

During advanced crisis, Secretary Rusk continued to demonstrate complexity that was characterized by emerging dimensions. Analysis of Rusk's average integrative complexity scores can be summarized by a typical passage that scored at an IC code of 2 (the closest whole number to his scoring of 1.76), or low integrative complexity that is marked by emergent rather than a fully developed differentiation of alternatives.

- **Score of 2** – Emergent differentiation of alternatives: "Department officials on Sunday welcomed Khrushchev's message but noted that it does not mean all problems are solved. The President welcomed the message as a constructive step towards peace. But Soviet intentions are not yet clear, and Cubans may still play an important role. Castro hinted in his broadcast today that he might throw Guantanamo into the discussion. The problems of verification, U.N. supervision, and inspection remain. Our reaction is positive, but much remains to be done in translating Khrushchev's words into action. Assurances on withdrawal and inspection are utterly fundamental."<sup>337</sup>

The crucial aspect of a score of 2 is the recognition of looking at the same issue in different ways but differentiations at this level are emergent rather than fully developed. In this passage for example, Rusk cautiously discussed the possibility of coming to crisis resolution with the Soviets while also bringing up potential problems involving alternative futures. The critical indicator for a score of 2 is the potential or conditional acceptance of different perspectives or dimensions while the author may not explicitly develop the alternative dimension or perspective. In this case Rusk did not explicitly expand on the continued American use of force either by air strike or naval quarantine. Thus, these characteristics are sufficient evidence to assign a score of 2. Although Rusk frequently demonstrated emergent differentiation of alternatives during acute crisis, in the context of advanced crisis, the U.S. Secretary of State became increasingly aware of alternative futures based on available American options that did not involve military action.

#### SUMMARY - INTEGRATIVE COMPLEXITY AS A MEASURE OF STRESS

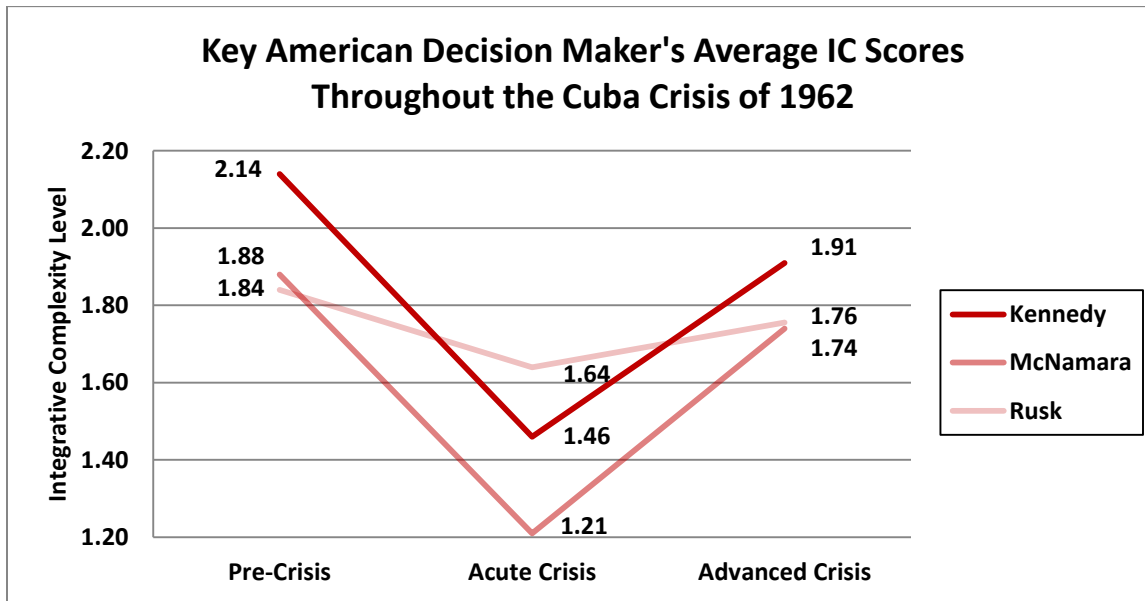
In review of the first two project research questions and investigation, over the course of the Cuban missile crisis in 1962, all three key American leaders were found to experience significant changes in their integrative complexity scores throughout the crisis. First, integrative complexity measurements of President Kennedy, Defense Secretary McNamara, and Secretary of State Rusk were obtained during normal

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<sup>337</sup> Rusk, D., *Department of State Telegram Briefing of a step toward peace with the Soviet Union*, 28 Oct, 1948, U.S. Department of State.

operational conditions of the pre-crisis period. These measurements served as the integrative complexity baseline scores.

Second, integrative complexity measurements of all three U.S. decision makers were taken again during the acute phase of the crisis period. Without exception, integrative complexity scores taken during the acute crisis phase were lower for the American leaders when compared to the integrative complexity baseline scores (see Figure 10).



**Figure 10 - Key American decision maker's average IC scores over the course of the Cuba crisis** <sup>338</sup>

These case findings during acute crisis highlight the correlation between stress and integrative complexity; in general, an increase in stress can be linked with a decline in integrative complexity performance. The acute crisis phase of the 1962 Cuba crisis contributed to the rise of significant stress for American decision makers.

Next, as the crisis progressed, integrative complexity measurements of the key leaders were taken again during the advanced phase of the crisis period. Integrative complexity scores taken during the advanced phase of the crisis period were higher for the American leaders when compared to the scores taken during the acute crisis phase of the crisis period. Analysis found that over the duration of the crisis period, all of the leaders experienced increases in their integrative complexity scores (see Figure 10).

<sup>338</sup> See Appendix B for comprehensive integrative complexity scoring.

These findings reinforce the correlation between stress and integrative complexity; in general, a decline in stress can be associated with an increase in integrative complexity performance. The advanced crisis phase of the 1962 Cuba crisis contributed to decline in conditions of stress for the American decision makers.

Fourth, while the integrative complexity scores of the key American leaders during crisis never returned to their integrative complexity baseline scores, their performance indicated that as the crisis period progressed, they were all able to regain a portion of their integrative complexity baseline abilities versus the scores that were measured during the most stressful conditions of the crisis period (see Figure 10). The case findings demonstrate that the element of stress was persistent throughout the crisis period as integrative complexity performance of the key policy makers never returned to normal operational levels.

Finally, the results of this case successfully demonstrate the links between decision conditions of stress and policy maker integrative complexity. In recapitulation, an increase in stress can be associated with a decline in policy maker integrative complexity. Conversely, a decline in stress can be associated with an increase in integrative complexity performance. Taking these findings into consideration, cognitive complexity is a sufficient independent measure of stress with which research scientists can accurately measure foreign policy decision conditions.

## CHAPTER 6 – CASE TWO FINDINGS

### CASE TWO: THE 1962 CUBA CRISIS – INTEGRATIVE COMPLEXITY CONSEQUENCES FOR DECISION MAKING

The main purpose of this chapter is to continue the psychological analysis of major American policymakers who found themselves under conditions of increasing pressure during the Cuba crisis in 1962. Investigation will focus on assessing the relationship between higher stress levels, integrative complexity, and leadership decision making performance. This case will serve as a forum for specifically evaluating the crisis decision making behavioral pathologies that Janis and Mann's model specifies in the context of the Cuban missile crisis, serving to highlight the links between decision related stress, cognitive complexity, and behavioral responses that led to a peaceful resolution of the foreign policy crisis.

#### CUBA 1962, PRE-CRISIS PERIOD

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#### ANALYTICAL FRAME – QUESTION THREE

**3. Based on the measured levels of cognitive complexity over the course of foreign policy crisis, what types of behavioral responses are observed specific to the Janis and Mann crisis model of decision making? (This section will demonstrate the links across complexity, stress, and behavior.)**

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#### PRESIDENT KENNEDY FINDINGS DURING PRE-CRISIS

As President of the United States, President Kennedy's role in American foreign policy and national security fields in 1962 was that of "principal decision maker".<sup>339</sup> Kennedy's involvement in the actual decision making process was central during the crisis that brought a significant rise in the perception of threat, imposed the salience of time and also increased the probability of war. These perspectives are captured in the President's initial integrative complexity scores. Throughout the Cuba crisis period, Kennedy convened and oversaw discussions of a group he formed on his own initiative that was named the Executive Committee of the National Security Council (Ex Comm). By the President's own insistence, he retained ultimate responsibility for the policies and conduct of his Administration during the crisis.<sup>340</sup>

Specifically during the pre-crisis time period, from a motivational account the American President perceived the Soviet Union to be an increasing threat and Kennedy became absorbed with countering Soviet

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<sup>339</sup> Hilsman, R. *The Politics of Policy-Making in Defense and Foreign Affairs* (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), 18.

<sup>340</sup> Sorensen, T.C., *Kennedy*, (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), 705.

communism. As tension increased over the course of pre-crisis in 1962, President Kennedy proclaimed, "The enemy is the communist system itself - implacable, insatiable, and increasing in its drive for world domination. This is not a struggle for supremacy of arms alone but a struggle for supremacy between two conflicting ideologies: freedom versus ruthless tyranny."<sup>341</sup> The U.S. President was also preoccupied with demonstrating resolve as a result of stressful and humiliating events that he had endured early in his Presidency concerning American exploits against Cuba and by association, communism and the Soviet Union. This was Kennedy's key concern that in no small measure shaped his entire outlook on international relations in 1962 and drove much of his subsequent foreign policy behavior during the Cuba crisis.

The U.S. President had originally hoped to arrive at a point where both the Soviet Union and the United States could engage in authentic negotiations but at measured levels of complexity during the pre-crisis period, Kennedy steadily modified his expectations and considered courses of action using military force with greater frequency. During pre-crisis, Kennedy's advisers were divided. Some advocated a strong military buildup and the use of force if necessary to maintain Western initiatives, while others were concerned that an emphasis on military capabilities might undermine the Soviet Union's prestige to a point where Soviet leadership felt that Moscow could not back down from a nuclear showdown.<sup>342</sup> In numerous interviews during pre-crisis in 1962, Kennedy himself mirrored this ambivalence stating that "only fools could cling to the idea of victory in a nuclear war" but that "lasting peace with the Soviets is unlikely."<sup>343</sup>

At measured complexity levels, Kennedy's view of the Soviet Union and the Communists as his "most dangerous problem" only grew more intense as stress mounted during the pre-crisis period. Although this motivational perspective was beset with concern, Kennedy seldom tempered his preoccupation with alternative thinking. The U.S. President never exhibited any signs of empathy for Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev and did not appear to be capable of seeing Soviet demands and actions in Germany or in Latin America from the perspective of Russian anxieties about Moscow's own security. To Kennedy, the suggestion that a liberated Germany, American offensive missiles abroad, or priority strategic interests of the United States could threaten Russia was inconceivable. At the same time, rising stress and American paranoia caused the actions of the adversary to appear to become more hostile toward the U.S. and specifically for the American administration, the Soviets had "confidence and continue to confront us with political pressure, subversion, and the threat of nuclear war."<sup>344</sup> On one occasion in August 1961, Kennedy stated "if we fail here in the United States to recognize that defeating Communism is the issue to which we should be devoting our attention, then its spread and the failure of the American free society, is going to be far more assured."<sup>345</sup>

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<sup>341</sup> "Kennedy speech to audience in Salt Lake City", September 1960, Presidential Election Campaign Files, John F. Kennedy Library.

<sup>342</sup> Schlesinger, Jr., A.M., *A Thousand Days*, (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1965), 363.

<sup>343</sup> *Ibid.*, 365.

<sup>344</sup> Rusk, D., McNamara, R.S., McCone, J.A., Leminitzer, L.L., Memorandum for the President, "Report on Implications for U.S. Foreign and Defense Policy of Recent Intelligence Estimates," and attachment: "Report of the Special Inter-Departmental Committee on Implications of National Intelligence Estimate 11-8-62 and Related Intelligence," 23 August, 1962.

<sup>345</sup> President's Press Conference, 10 August, 1961, Papers of John F. Kennedy, Presidential Papers, President's Office Files.

The military balance of strategic weapons was another issue that contributed to increased tensions and significant strategic decisions during pre-crisis. Although Kennedy's goal was strategic superiority at all costs, Washington was deeply divided on the question of the "missile gap" between the Americans and the Soviet Union. From a cognitive perspective, the Kennedy administration attempted to process a tremendous increase in reporting on Soviet missile activities and the President's staff sorted through an overwhelming amount of conflicting information. The mass of information caused Washington communications to become focused more internally versus externally and the amount of novel information tended to decrease.<sup>346</sup> To illustrate, the December 1960 National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) portrayed the Soviets ahead in missile numbers and were assessed to have between 35-150 operational Inter-Continental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) with projections of future deployments to be as high as between 600 to 800.<sup>347</sup> Less than two months later, Kennedy announced the largest and fastest peacetime military buildup in U.S. history.<sup>348</sup> Over time, the Kennedy administration exhibited Janis and Mann's behavioral pattern of defensive avoidance, or more precisely bolstering, as they used the available information that had become comfortable for the purposes of supporting chosen U.S. administration goals and policies. Merely by making his expectations and preferences known, President Kennedy had encouraged his subordinates to report or emphasize information supportive of those expectations and preferences.

Additionally, the President's aims caused his communication networks and intelligence organizations to bolster, or report and emphasize information supportive of his expectations and preferences.<sup>349</sup> During pre-crisis for example, this was exhibited by Kennedy's intelligence apparatus in Washington when the Defense Secretary's office published two separate NIEs in December 1960 and June 1961 that referred to a "missile gap" even though there was emerging information that characterized parity.<sup>350</sup> Amid new rounds of Soviet nuclear tests however, "new intelligence" gained at the end of 1961 confirmed previous reports that the Soviet Union's ICBMs would only be deployed in small numbers because of operational inadequacies and therefore, the United States possessed overwhelming strategic superiority.<sup>351</sup> Even so, only when this information was released to the public at the end of 1961, did the Kennedy administration coincidentally decide to send an offensive message to Moscow informing the Soviets that Washington possessed an overwhelming strategic advantage. At measured complexity levels, President Kennedy took this step with the

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<sup>346</sup> Janis, I.L., *Victims of Groupthink*, (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1972).

<sup>347</sup> McNamara, R., "Memorandum for the President, The Missile Gap Controversy, 4 March 1963", John F. Kennedy Library.

<sup>348</sup> Sorensen, *Kennedy*, 608-610.

<sup>349</sup> Lebow, R. N. *Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crisis*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), 114.

<sup>350</sup> *National Intelligence Estimate 11-8/1-61*, as described in a memorandum from Lawrence McQuade to Paul Nitze, "But Where Did the Missile Gap Go?", 31 May 1963, 15. Opinion within the intelligence community remained divided well into the spring of 1961 but by September, the CIA brought forward concrete intelligence that Moscow's SS-6 ICBM force deployments were in fact much smaller than originally anticipated.

<sup>351</sup> Penkovskiy, O., *The Penkovskiy Papers*, (Gardency, NY: Doubleday, 1965)

hope that it would moderate Khrushchev's bellicosity, but it turned out to have the opposite effect on Moscow as the Kremlin viewed the announcement as a threat.<sup>352</sup>

As the Soviet Union persisted with tests of nuclear weapons during pre-crisis, American stress levels continued to increase. From a foreign policy perspective, Washington reacted to their perceptions of Soviet military escalation by accelerating deployments of their own ballistic missiles to Allied countries in Europe. While the U.S. missiles could operationally target Soviet cities, their primary purpose was to provide political reassurance to the Western Europeans of America's commitment to their defense.<sup>353</sup> Although western intent was an important distinction in this case, unfortunately it made little difference to Moscow. The strategic effect of American foreign policy decision that emplaced missiles capable of striking Russian targets abroad was viewed solely as a provocation by Khrushchev. As decision conditions of pressure and strain increased, at measured levels of integrative complexity Kennedy did not recognize the strategic tradeoff of the U.S. foreign policy decision for their own security during the pre-crisis period. If the Americans had cognizance of the resulting environment of insecurity, arguably Washington would have behaved far differently, potentially averting the Cuba crisis altogether.

During the pre-crisis period, Moscow repeatedly warned against the U.S. missile deployment abroad. Khrushchev personally complained to Kennedy about it on three occasions during private conversations.<sup>354</sup> The Soviets asserted that an American military buildup in Turkey would pose a serious threat to Moscow's security. Although the Soviet Union provided ample warning that American execution of Washington's foreign policy would have negative consequences, the U.S. was already committed, ignored Moscow's warnings, and Kennedy allowed the American missile deployments to continue. From this pre-crisis perspective, President Kennedy's foreign policy behavior was again indicative of Janis and Mann's behavior pattern of defensive avoidance or more precisely bolstering. Bolstering is detrimental when it discourages a careful evaluation of alternatives or realistic assessment of the risks associated with a preferred course of action. It results in policy makers believing that they have made good decisions when they have avoided careful appraisal of available alternatives. During pre-crisis for example, wishful thinking, overconfidence, and insensitivity to threatening information help to explain why Kennedy and the Americans committed to the missile deployment, failed to think through its implications, and remained committed in the face of Khrushchev's warnings.<sup>355</sup>

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<sup>352</sup> Lebow, R.N., Stein, J.G., *We All Lost the Cold War*, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994), 36.

<sup>353</sup> Lebow and Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War*, 42.

<sup>354</sup> Statements by Khrushchev and articles critical of the deployment appeared in *Pravda*, 22 December 1957, 31 May and 7 June 1959, *New Times*, No. 27, 1960, 22-23, and *International Affairs* (Moscow), 37, No. 4, 1961, 108-110.

<sup>355</sup> Janis, I.L., Mann, L. *Decision Making: A Psychological Analysis of Conflict, Choice, and Commitment*, (New York: The Free Press, 1977), 55-58, 74, 107-133.



Domestic politics also played a role in causing a rise in Kennedy's stress levels during pre-crisis and took part in driving his decision making behavior.<sup>356</sup> By mid-1962, considering American problems with the Soviets, the President became even more concerned about Cuba due to his domestic image. Possible Soviet arms shipments and Republican charges that he was not doing enough to get rid of Castro convinced Kennedy to give greater latitude to both military and covert planning efforts. In August 1962, Kennedy requested that the Department of Defense accelerate their arms acquisition programs, renew contingency planning efforts in response to reports of increased Soviet arms shipments to Cuba, and develop courses of action to counter to the remote possibility that Moscow might introduce nuclear weapons capable of attacking the United States.<sup>357</sup> Naturally, the renewed American focus and military planning evolutions on Cuba were accompanied by the perceptions of a U.S. military buildup in the Caribbean that only served to increase Kennedy's psychological stress levels as Havana and Moscow took the wrong message.<sup>358</sup> While Kennedy's instructions to the military may have been an effort to plan against the worst case scenario that Soviet involvement in Cuba might compel him to order U.S. military action, it contributed to increased tensions and built an atmosphere of insecurity between Washington and Moscow.

In the fall of 1962 amid rising stress levels, President Kennedy's measure of complexity responded to domestic concerns that the Soviet Union might send missiles to Cuba with a series of public and private warnings to the Kremlin. As stress continued to increase, at the beginning of September, Kennedy drew a distinction between offensive and defensive weapons while messaging to Khrushchev that there would be problems of strategic proportions if the United States found evidence of "offensive missiles in Cuban hands or under Soviet direction."<sup>359</sup> If there was evidence of these missiles in Cuba, Kennedy declared "the gravest issues would arise."<sup>360</sup> At a 13 September press conference, the President promised to "take whatever action is necessary to ensure that no offensive weapons are installed in Cuba."<sup>361</sup> While the Soviet government issued an official response to the U.S. President's warnings, Moscow's statement was not reassuring as it made no commitment to refrain from the introduction of missiles into Cuba.<sup>362</sup> Unfortunately, the American behavior of sending warnings had the opposite of Washington's intended effect and instead served to further Soviet insecurities.

Countering any Soviet action gradually became an all-consuming goal for the American President during the pre-crisis period. Considering the importance of U.S. strategic goals and the posture of American behavior that took place during pre-crisis, from a psychological perspective Kennedy did not believe that it was possible to back down and retain credibility as the leader of the free world. Under considerable psychological

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<sup>356</sup> Lebow, R.N., "Domestic politics and the Cuban missile crisis", *Diplomatic History*, (1990), 471-492.

<sup>357</sup> McGeorge Bundy to Secretary Rusk, National Security Action Memorandum No. 181, 23 August 1962; Church Committee, 147.

<sup>358</sup> Lebow and Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War*, 27.

<sup>359</sup> *New York Times*, 8 September 1962.

<sup>360</sup> U.S. Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. XLVII, No. 1213, 24 September, 1962, 450.

<sup>361</sup> Kennedy's Statement of 07 September, 1962, *Department of State Bulletin* 47, 1 October 1962, 481-482.

<sup>362</sup> Lebow and Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War*, 68. The official press statement from the Soviet government declared that the Soviet Union had no need to station any retaliatory weapons to defend Cuba.

stress, the President worried “that Khrushchev might interpret his reluctance to wage nuclear war as a symptom of an American loss of nerve.”<sup>363</sup> Amid declining complexity, Kennedy bolstered his behavior with the belief that his approach would result in high gains with minimal losses that were worth the risks that they entailed. This was satisfactorily demonstrated when Kennedy indicated that the time might come that he would have to run “the supreme risk” of nuclear war to convince Khrushchev that the U.S. was willing to go to any lengths to prove to the USSR that American conciliation was not humiliation.<sup>364</sup> Kennedy stated his decision that, “if Khrushchev wants to rub my nose in dirt, it’s all over.”<sup>365</sup> Kennedy’s decision on how to convince Khrushchev of American strength short of a showdown were summed up by the President’s obtuse statement, “That son of a bitch won’t pay any attention to words; he has to see you move.”<sup>366</sup>

Nonetheless, throughout the pre-crisis period Kennedy clearly perceived the Soviet Union as an increasing threat to which he had to demonstrate resolve and this corresponded with his psychological stress levels. This motivational perspective is captured in the President’s pre-crisis integrative complexity scores. As the pre-crisis period drew closer to crisis, President Kennedy’s stress levels gradually increased. Amid increasing worry during pre-crisis, the Kennedy Administration chose to continue Washington’s communication of warning to both Soviet and Cuban leaders. As late as the end of September 1962, Kennedy voiced: “The United States has reason to believe that the Soviet government is increasing its shipments of conventional arms to Cuba, and may have under consideration the establishment of guided missile facilities in Cuba. In order to avoid any possibility of misunderstanding on the part of the governments concerned, I wish to make the intentions of this government in that regard quite clear.”<sup>367</sup>

In the mind of the American President, there was nothing more that he could do to deter the Soviet Union from shipping missiles to Havana. By the beginning of October 1962, U.S. senior officials reasoned that Khrushchev would have to be completely irrational to challenge the United States in a region where it possessed overwhelming military superiority after Kennedy had made clear that the introduction of adversarial offensive weapons was unacceptable to the Americans.<sup>368</sup> Therefore, decision makers in Washington were genuinely shocked when the Soviets secretly deployed missiles to Cuban territory. While Khrushchev’s movement of the missiles came as a surprise to the Americans, the Russian deployment was not advanced without ample cause; depending upon perspective, the military move was viewed by the Soviets as quite rational. Stressful American decision conditions contributed to integrative complexity levels that drove

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<sup>363</sup> Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 391.

<sup>364</sup> *Ibid.*, 391.

<sup>365</sup> *Ibid.*, 391.

<sup>366</sup> *Ibid.*, 363.

<sup>367</sup> President Kennedy Letter to Khrushchev stating the U.S. position on Cuban missile facilities, 20 September, 1962. Papers of Robert F. Kennedy, Attorney General’s Confidential File, 6-4-2: Cuba: Cuban Crisis, 1962: Kennedy-Khrushchev Letters.

<sup>368</sup> Martin, E., Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, “Transcript of the proceedings of the Havana Conference on the Cuban Missile Crisis, 9-12 January 1992”, mimeograph, 120. See also Blight, J.G., Allyn, B.J., Welch, D.A., *Cuba on the Brink: Castro, the Missile Crisis, and the Soviet Collapse* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1995).

U.S. foreign policy behavior to have the opposite effect of deterrence, instead provoking Khrushchev and enhancing Soviet perceptions of Moscow's own insecurity.

As stress steadily increased over the months leading up to the missile crisis, the arousal of emotions and decision conditions of increasing pressure inhibited the ability of the Kennedy administration to think clearly.<sup>369</sup> The President's desire for demonstrating resolve and overconfidence in American behavior to achieve Washington's security help to explain why the Kennedy administration was convinced that Khrushchev would not deploy Soviet missiles to Cuba. Amid rising conditions of stress at measured levels of complexity, Kennedy's decision to press the Cuba issue based on American goals and objectives, ultimately served to escalate the situation with the Soviets, causing Moscow to come to Castro's aid. As stress increased during pre-crisis, American decisions ended up being provocative rather than preventive.<sup>370</sup> The American strategic military buildup, deployment of their own missiles in Turkey, and assertions of clear superiority, made Moscow increasingly insecure.<sup>371</sup> Kennedy's increased stress and reduced cognitive complexity viewed these measures as prudent, defensive precautions against the perceived Soviet threat, but his decisions had the opposing consequence of convincing Khrushchev of the need to protect the Soviet Union and Cuba from American challenges.<sup>372</sup>

#### DEFENSE SECRETARY MCNAMARA FINDINGS DURING PRE-CRISIS

In parallel with the Kennedy Administration in 1962, from a motivational account U.S. Defense Secretary McNamara perceived an increase in the Soviet threat during the pre-crisis period. This perspective is captured in the Defense Secretary's initial integrative complexity scores. More specifically, as an institution the Pentagon was mired in the details of Cold War military planning and had come to regard an eventual military exchange with the Soviet Union as practically inevitable; unsurprisingly, McNamara took on these perceptions. Viewing the Soviet Union as an aggressive and hostile adversary, the Pentagon favored the consolidation of America's strategic position by continuing to enhance U.S. military superiority.

In tandem with the cognitive complexity levels, McNamara decided to make increasing investments for military purposes in order to gain what the Americans thought would be the upper hand in the Cold War. During pre-crisis, McNamara's main concern was to "take significant steps to increase U.S. deterrence posture and strengthen military capabilities against the Soviet Communists."<sup>373</sup> Predictably, McNamara initiated specific policies at the Pentagon to build arms that were tailored to the goals of American policy. As psychological stress increased in U.S. defense channels during pre-crisis, the atmosphere highlighted

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<sup>369</sup> Lebow, R.N., *Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crisis*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), 64.

<sup>370</sup> Lebow and Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War*, 49.

<sup>371</sup> *Ibid.*, 49.

<sup>372</sup> *Ibid.*, 49.

<sup>373</sup> McNamara, R.S., *The Essence of Security: Reflections in Office*, (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), 64.

American insecurity and Washington's own perception of continued Soviet aggression that the U.S. believed would eventually mean war.

Amid rising stress in 1962, in accordance with Kennedy's Presidential campaign promise to close the "missile gap", the Secretary of Defense maintained the U.S. focus on ballistic missile production in their perceived American arms race against the Russians. McNamara held the polar belief that the best defense strategy for the Americans was parity capability of mutually assured destruction with the Soviet Union. Under his perceptions of the Soviet threat, the Secretary of Defense decided to order forces and calculate missile procurement lead times based on the planning assumption of the "worst case scenario", solely to press for the strategic advantage.<sup>374</sup> To guard against a Soviet surprise attack, McNamara recommended to the President that he raise the proportion of SAC bombers on 15-minute ground alert from 25% to 50%, thus lessening the American vulnerability to missile attacks.<sup>375</sup> McNamara was also instrumental in decision making to establish the United States Strike Command (STRICOM) that was granted the authority to draw forces when needed "to respond swiftly and with whatever force necessary to threats against the peace in any part of the world, reinforcing missions, or carrying out separate operations."<sup>376</sup> During pre-crisis, the Defense Secretary also pressed the President for a nuclear shelter program as a survival mechanism against fallout. These policies demonstrate that McNamara's perspective was almost perfectly aligned with those of the U.S. President in formulating a global strategy against American perceptions of the Communist threat.

During pre-crisis, McNamara's levels of stress gradually increased and corresponded with measured levels of integrative complexity. From a cognitive perspective, incoming information reports that were incoming presented conflicting views on Russian military equipment and capabilities. As the Kennedy Administration had the political goal of countering Soviet strategic superiority while the Pentagon was following through on defense commitments, McNamara and others based their decisions on select reporting that accorded with U.S. strategic policy aims. As information gradually emerged that depicted the Soviets as a considerably less capable adversary than originally anticipated, this naturally presented a direct threat to existing American defense policies that were already in progress against the Soviet Union. According to Janis and Mann's dysfunctional behavior pattern of defensive avoidance, at the head of the Pentagon, McNamara took lead in ignoring information that ran counter to Pentagon aims while bolstering the chosen policies of the American President with reporting that supported Washington's objectives. On the other hand, Khrushchev's continuous claims of strategic superiority and threats to weaken the Western alliance did not make the task of exercising foreign policy restraint any easier for the Americans.

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<sup>374</sup> Smith, E., Wayne, A., *How Much Is Enough?: Shaping the Defense Program, 1961-1969*, (Santa Monica, CA, Rand Corporation: 2005), 49.

<sup>375</sup> McNamara, R.S., *The Essence of Security: Reflections in Office*, (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), 65.

<sup>376</sup> Smith and Wayne, *How Much Is Enough?: Shaping the Defense Program, 1961-1969*, 48-58.

More specifically, as rhetoric increased in intensity from Moscow, the Soviets conducted near continuous nuclear weapons testing of increasing proportions during pre-crisis; this contributed to conditions of steadily increasing stress for the Pentagon in Washington. To no surprise, the Kennedy Administration pressurized the U.S. Jupiter ballistic missile deployment to Turkey and shifted the responsibility to the Department of Defense.<sup>377</sup> Even though lengthy Pentagon planning sessions highlighted the immense strategic risk that an American missile deployment to Turkey entailed, at measured levels of integrative complexity, McNamara did not forward the negative findings to Kennedy and the deployment of American ballistic missiles went forward. Exhibiting Janis and Mann's behavior pattern of defensive avoidance, by knowing the U.S. President's preferences, McNamara emphasized only the information supportive of his superior's policies and avoided information that ran counter to those expectations and preferences. The Pentagon's relationship with U.S. NATO partners underscored the military importance of sending U.S. missiles to Turkey and when combined with McNamara's understanding of the President's desires, the Secretary of Defense bolstered information regarding the proposed deployment, even though his own Pentagon officers had found that a U.S. ballistic missile deployment abroad was militarily dangerous. As decision conditions of pressure increased, in the Defense Secretary's own words, "There would have been a psychological loss to the West of simply cancelling the plan."<sup>378</sup> As pre-crisis stress levels continued to rise for the Pentagon, the American missiles arrived in Turkey; amid changing decision conditions, McNamara's dysfunctional behavior patterns identified by Janis and Mann contributed to an environment of increasing insecurity from the Soviet perspective.

Further, although McNamara became cognizant of strategic force ratios in distinct favor of the United States over the Soviets during pre-crisis, the U.S. Defense Secretary decided to not take any immediate actions to slow the aggressive American military arms buildup. As pre-crisis reporting of force ratios and Soviet capabilities were available from CIA sources but not yet published in an official NIE<sup>379</sup>, McNamara used the psychological coping strategies of selective attention and denial to assist in dealing with information that presented a threat to the chosen objectives of his Commander in Chief. Again, by knowing the President's preferences, McNamara reported and emphasized only the information supportive of his superior's policies and avoided information that ran counter to Kennedy's expectations. After the NIE of September 1961 revealed that the Soviet strategic arsenal was neither as large nor increasing as rapidly as had been assessed, the damage to America's foreign policy goals had already taken place.<sup>380</sup> Stress contributed to the American Administration's behavior and actions at measured complexity levels that drove Khrushchev and Moscow to react. When it finally became public knowledge that the nuclear capabilities of the United States had surpassed those of the Soviet Union "roughly by a factor of two", Soviet impressions of their own insecurity

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<sup>377</sup> Bernstein, B.J., "Reconsidering the Missile Crisis: Dealing with the Problems of the American Jupiters in Turkey", Nathan, J. ed., *The Cuban Missile Crisis Revisited*, (New York: MacMillan, 1992), 61.

<sup>378</sup> Bernstein, *The Cuban Missile Crisis Revisited*, 62.

<sup>379</sup> Available information within the U.S. intelligence community resulted in divided opinions well into the spring of 1961. By September, the CIA brought forward "concrete intelligence" that Moscow's SS-6 ICBM force deployments were much smaller than originally anticipated.

<sup>380</sup> *National Intelligence Estimate 11-8/1-61* assessed that Moscow's SS-6 ICBM force deployments would not be a significant threat to the U.S. strategic missile inventory.

were already formed.<sup>381</sup> To make matters worse, the U.S. chose to brandish the information of American superiority publicly. At the end of 1961, McNamara told reporters that the American nuclear arsenal was “several times that of the Soviets,” and this only served to increase U.S. stress levels and exacerbate Moscow’s own insecurity.<sup>382</sup>

Much like Kennedy’s staff, U.S. Department of Defense officers at the Pentagon also had to sort through a tremendous volume of continuous reporting. McNamara received so many briefings that he demanded written products from military officers as he claimed to be able to read faster than they could speak.<sup>383</sup> Delays in information processing were inevitable in the presence of significant information overload while the conflicting nature of the reports made the presentation of a clear picture even more difficult. Considering McNamara’s stress levels, even after the reporting trends indicated that the amount of Soviet arms was roughly half of the American strategic inventory, at measured levels of complexity McNamara and the Pentagon did not attempt to engage the President or develop a concrete plan to readdress the situation of the increasing stockpile American arms.<sup>384</sup> Selective attention and denial among McNamara and Pentagon staff prevented any course reversal options from taking place in U.S. defense channels or forwarding any recommendations to the U.S. President for decision.

At the Pentagon specifically, communication became focused more internally versus externally and the introduction of new information from external sources declined. For example, McNamara’s consultative circle on defense proceedings during the pre-crisis period was restricted mainly to his subordinates within the Pentagon and the White House. Under no documented circumstances did the U.S. Defense Secretary venture outside of U.S. government channels to obtain advice from unaffiliated entities that were agnostic of interests. Within the Pentagon itself, the consultative process was purely institutional inside Washington. Evidence demonstrates that the Department of Defense Headquarters was also structured to maximize control of information while minimizing external influence outside its official channels.<sup>385</sup> Regardless of the reasons, communication that characterized the Russian threat led to extremely inaccurate assessments and that colored obtuse perceptions by McNamara and his organizational staff inside U.S. defense channels. Consequently, no restrictions were placed upon U.S. Pentagon defense policies prior to Soviet missiles being emplaced in Cuba. During the pre-crisis period, McNamara failed making recommendations to the President that would have subsequently minimized the impact of increasing stress and perhaps slowed the arrival of the American crisis over Cuba.

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<sup>381</sup> Briefing by Dean Rusk, Marshall Carter, and Robert McNamara before the Executive Session of the Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committee, 5 September, 1962.

<sup>382</sup> “Was There Ever a ‘Missile Gap’ – or Just an Intelligence Gap?”, *Newsweek*, 13 November 1961, 23.

<sup>383</sup> Leonard, M., Blackhurst, R., “Interview with Robert McNamara on Vietnam and the Cuban Missile Crisis”, *The Guardian*, World News Foreign Policy Center, 18 May, 2002.

<sup>384</sup> George, A.L., Smoke, R. *Deterrence in American Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974), 130.

<sup>385</sup> *Ibid.*, 131.

Amid rising stress levels, McNamara's behavior patterns of bolstering continued over the course of pre-crisis in 1962. Considering McNamara's complexity levels, he seemed to have little notion that the American arms buildup and assertions of Washington's superiority could be found by Moscow to be threatening. The American Secretary of Defense never considered that an approach of discontinuing the buildup of American arms might be the solution toward achieving cooperative relations with the Soviet Union. From this vantage point, McNamara displayed neither flexibility nor measured decision making in his role as the leader of the U.S. defense industry. At McNamara's measured levels of integrative complexity, the Defense Secretary's behavior to implement Pentagon initiatives contributed to further tensions between Washington and Moscow.

McNamara's support of Kennedy's foreign policy toward the Soviets undoubtedly played a large role in creating the crisis over the missiles in Havana. Amid the increasing stress of the pre-crisis period, McNamara's decisions contributed to shifting the balance of power in favor of the West. McNamara's American defense posture contributed to forcing Moscow to re-evaluate the Russian position, causing a robust Soviet reaction in the western hemisphere vis a vis Cuba. As Kennedy's anti-Soviet approach was the guiding objective of American foreign policy during 1962, American decision making behavior during pre-crisis only served to amplify Washington's insecurities, counter U.S. aims, and create a situation of acute foreign policy crisis with Moscow that would create even more stressful decision conditions over nuclear missiles in Cuba.

Although the Soviet missiles appearing in Cuba was alarming to McNamara, it should not have been such a surprise. While it can be argued that the Secretary of Defense's own manipulation of the Pentagon contributed to the installation of Soviet missiles in Havana and a massive escalation of the Cold War, during pre-crisis, it was his initial perception of the Soviet Union as an expanding American threat that brought increasingly stressful decision conditions and lowered his integrative complexity levels. Much like President Kennedy, McNamara's anti-Communist rhetoric and behavior was continuous, and the surprise over the appearance of Soviet missiles in Cuba was the same.

Adequate material also exists on McNamara's account to suggest that during pre-crisis, the officials of the Pentagon exhibited conformity to group decision making or the psychology of groupthink.<sup>386</sup> In Washington for example, the defense department collectively misconstrued the Russian threat and even after reports highlighted previous inaccuracies, the Pentagon was negligent in changing their strategy pertaining to American arms acquisition or forwarding any recommendations to the U.S. President when it mattered. McNamara also held stereotyped views, coincident with the insecurity of the U.S. defense establishment, of the aggressive and hostile nature of the Soviet leaders on the opposing side.<sup>387</sup> McNamara's dominant pre-

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<sup>386</sup> Janis, *Victims of Groupthink: a Psychological Study of Foreign Policy Decisions and Fiascoes*, 15.

<sup>387</sup> Janis I.L., "Groupthink", *Psychology Today*, (Ziff-Davis Publishing Company, 1971), 86.

crisis thinking was anti-communist on principle and the Defense Secretary held the Pentagon's collective view that the implementation of a moderate approach with the Soviets would be ineffective. The Defense Secretary's mindset of mutually assured destruction underscored this widespread American insecurity.

Considering group pressure, self-censorship, and illusions of unanimity, similar to Kennedy's Administration, the McNamara and the Pentagon staff also tried to minimize conflict and reach consensus decisions without a critical evaluation of alternative perspectives. To illustrate, complaints surfaced from the Joint Chiefs that some military members at the Pentagon had been pressured to sign written statements declaring the adequacy of McNamara's policies and that the Defense Secretary had imposed a "party line" from which no deviations were permitted.<sup>388</sup> Furthermore, McNamara clashed with the JCS over what they said in public and the military chiefs came forward with information stating that the Defense Secretary tried to censor their speeches.<sup>389</sup> As McNamara's Defense Department gradually isolated their discussions from external influences inside Washington, any possibility of peaceful options during pre-crisis steadily gave way to a prevailing collective line of thinking that was focused on "building strategic arms against America's greatest threat."<sup>390</sup> Few voices of dissent were discernable to this approach across the U.S. defense establishment, while the strategy was fully embraced by the Washington administration. Further, as Kennedy brooded over the risks of nuclear war during pre-crisis, as the leader of the Pentagon, McNamara encouraged the President to develop a policy "to use nuclear weapons wherever it is necessary to protect our forces and achieve our objectives."<sup>391</sup> Considering these overtures, McNamara's staff protected against adverse information by indirectly suppressing challenging viewpoints and avoiding controversial issues along with potential alternative course of action development. As such, these examples highlight groupthink characteristics that resulted in a loss of novel, creative, and independent thinking that often produce successful solutions; the collective behavior dysfunction of the Defense Department, in this case, resulted in degraded decision making.<sup>392</sup>

#### SECRETARY OF STATE RUSK FINDINGS DURING PRE-CRISIS

As tensions began to rise during the pre-crisis period in 1962, from a motivational perspective, U.S. Secretary of State Dean Rusk strongly believed in the continuation of U.S. containment policies of the Soviet Union and that America had a responsibility to support friendly nations under the perceived threat of communism. On the other hand, the U.S. Secretary of State equated American diplomacy with the aims of previous work that

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<sup>388</sup> Stevenson, C.A., *SECDEF: The Nearly Impossible Job of Secretary of Defense*, (Washington, DC: Potomac Books, Inc., 2006), 31.

<sup>389</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

<sup>390</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.

<sup>391</sup> Schandler, H.Y., *U.S. Policy on the Use of Nuclear Weapons, 1945-1975*, 55.

<sup>392</sup> Janis, *Victims of Groupthink: a Psychological Study of Foreign Policy Decisions and Fiascoes*, 17.



he had done at the United Nations (UN). He would frequently read the Preamble to the U.N. Charter and proclaim, "I have just read to you the essential foreign policy of the United States."<sup>393</sup>

Despite his expressed favor toward diplomacy however, Rusk remained hardline anti-communist in his views. Leading up to the discovery of Soviet missiles in Cuba, from a motivational account, Rusk perceived an increase in the Soviet threat and the Secretary's stress levels began to rise. This perspective is captured in the Secretaries' initial integrative complexity scores. As the Kennedy Administration and Pentagon continued to build U.S. military capabilities during pre-crisis, at measured complexity levels, the Secretary of State supported America's foreign policy to combat communism.

By July 1962, as an institution the State Department had become extremely skeptical of the possibility of successful negotiations with the Soviet Union. As his Presidential advisory role required, Rusk continued to examine opportunities for diplomacy in carrying out America's foreign policy but substantive dialogue involving compromise with Moscow was limited. Viewing the Soviet Union as an aggressive and potentially insatiable adversary, the State Department favored the consolidation of America's position in the western hemisphere by taking full use of friendly economic advantages to isolate Havana, exertion of maximum pressure on Moscow by enhancing U.S. military superiority, while only offering diplomatic communications to clearly express America's intentions. This approach was judged by the Secretary of State to act as a counterbalance to Moscow's provocative assertions and "make it abundantly clear to the Soviets that Cuba would be an unprofitable enterprise for Communist penetration."<sup>394</sup>

Although Rusk's outlook on the Soviets led to policy accord with the President, the Secretary's motivational account of the Russians was very much that of a diplomat concerned with foreign intentions. As he became increasingly concerned with Khrushchev's intent, Rusk's decisions supported the Pentagon's position on the American buildup of increased capabilities and military posture. In parallel with the Secretary of Defense, Rusk viewed the Cold War as a political conflict between two superpowers whose outcome would be determined by not only the balance of military and economic strengths of the two sides, but eventually resolved through diplomatic compromise because of the understood reality of mutually assured destruction.<sup>395</sup> Regardless, the Secretary's perception of the Soviets as a threat brought accompanying stress.

During the pre-crisis period, decision making conditions of stress and pressure continued to increase for the Rusk as the Soviet Union conducted frequent nuclear weapons tests. Simultaneously, intense rhetoric was

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<sup>393</sup> Henry II, J.B., Espinosa, W., "The Tragedy of Dean Rusk", *Foreign Policy*, No.8. Autumn, 1972, 172.

<sup>394</sup> Telegram from Secretary of State Rusk to the Department of State, 26 September, 1962, "Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961-1963", Volume X, Cuba, January 1961-September 1962. U.S. Department of State Office of the Historian.

<sup>395</sup> Bohlen, C.E., *The Transformation of American Foreign Policy*, (New York: Norton, 1969), 87.

forwarded by Khrushchev on the growing military power of the Soviet Communist camp.<sup>396</sup> Considering this context, there was no open disagreement from the State Department on the substance of anti-Communist policies and particularly on the need to strengthen America's strategic missile forces. As the President was consumed in the formulation of America's foreign policy goal of countering the Russians, as Secretary of State, Rusk took the subordinate role of seeing to the implementation and execution Kennedy's foreign policy preferences.

As Rusk's stress levels increased, the Secretary needed no reminders from his State Department advisors to emphasize the importance of having a credible military posture in dealing with the Soviets. To illustrate, after Washington's perception of increased Soviet bellicosity over aggressive rhetoric and massive nuclear weapons tests, Kennedy decided to send a message to Khrushchev indicating that American intelligence had discovered a strategic imbalance between American and Soviet missile forces and that the United States possessed overwhelming superiority. The office of the U.S. Secretary of Defense delivered the President's message in a speech at the end of 1961 and shortly thereafter, in a televised address, Secretary of State Rusk chose to endorse the strategic imbalance stating that American superiority was one important reason why the United States was able to confront the Soviets from a position of strength.<sup>397</sup> Rusk assumed responsibility for the speech and stated that despite Moscow's public denials, "Mr. Khrushchev must know that we are strong, and he does know that we are strong."<sup>398</sup>

Rusk's follow through on the implementation of Kennedy's foreign policy demonstrated that the Secretary's perspective was almost perfectly aligned with those of the American President in formulating an anti-communist strategy towards the Soviet Union. At measured complexity levels, Rusk's unconstrained allowance of the Pentagon's buildup of strategic arms and the Secretary of State's overt statements of superiority were successful in the implementation of a foreign policy approach that shifted the balance of power in favor of the West. As psychological stress levels increased for the Americans, at measured levels of complexity, Rusk's behavior contributed to the creation of palpable tension between Moscow and Washington. Rusk and the Americans were not aware that their communication of rapid expansion, enhanced U.S. military posture, and American strategic superiority would be considered provocative by Khrushchev.<sup>399</sup> In this example Rusk's stress levels contributed to American foreign policy behavior that took part in increasing Khrushchev's perception of strategic insecurity. From this standpoint, the effect of U.S. foreign policy undoubtedly played a large role in increasing conditions of stress and accelerated the arrival of conflict over Cuba.

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<sup>396</sup> *Current Soviet Policies IV: The Documentary Record of the Twenty-Second Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), 54.

<sup>397</sup> Lebow and Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War*, 37.

<sup>398</sup> *Department of State Bulletin* 45, 13 November, 1961, 801-802.

<sup>399</sup> Lebow and Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War*, 49.

Considering the pre-crisis atmosphere, Kennedy directed a special committee, drawn from the Departments of State and Defense and from the CIA to “review the question of deployment of U.S. strategic missiles to Turkey and make recommendations” to his administration.<sup>400</sup> Even though lengthy State Department deliberations took place with Rusk’s officers in discord over significant strategic risks that a U.S. ballistic missile deployment abroad entailed, opposing viewpoints were not forwarded by the Secretary of State and no action was taken by the President to cancel the projected deployment of American IRBMs. Kennedy’s expressed preferences caused Rusk to bolster the information that he forwarded to the President through the psychological coping mechanisms of selective attention and denial. The result was a course of action selection that was strategically and militarily dangerous. As pre-crisis stress levels continued to rise, Kennedy insisted on demonstrating resolve and Rusk continued to implement the President’s expressed desired foreign policy of deploying American missiles abroad.

To Rusk’s credit, it seems that during pre-crisis when he was confronted with critical or threatening information, he recognized the peril of the American foreign policy before it was too late. On his own initiative, Rusk tried to talk the Turks out of the U.S. missile deployment in April 1961. Due to various Turkish domestic political considerations, under the pressure of bi-lateral discussions, Rusk agreed that withdrawal of the American missiles would not be possible until the spring of 1963. Unfortunately, the U.S. Secretary of State did not press the matter further and let the American missile deployments go ahead.<sup>401</sup> Although Rusk had been confronted with Moscow’s warnings that threatened the American policy of their strategic missile deployments, Rusk explained it away through rationalization of the defensive needs of a NATO Ally. This evidence is sufficient to indicate that Rusk again bolstered the American foreign policy of U.S. missiles abroad by becoming insensitive to critical information that was crucial to proper evaluation of the American policy.<sup>402</sup> Nonetheless, Rusk failed to recognize the tradeoffs that he made on Washington’s behalf for leaving the U.S. missiles in place. This behavior certainly contributed to provoking the onset of the Cuba crisis in October 1962.

When the Soviet missiles appeared in Havana, it caused Rusk great alarm but perhaps it should not have been such a significant surprise. In pre-crisis conditions of rising stress for the Americans, Washington’s foreign policy behavior of “Communist containment” contributed to an environment of insecurity to which the Soviets responded by emplacing their own missiles in Cuba as a defensive precaution. While it can be argued that the Kennedy Administration’s own foreign policy behavior contributed to Khrushchev’s decision to set up offensive missiles in Cuba and provoked a major escalation of the Cold War, during pre-crisis, it was the Americans’ initial perception of the Soviet Union as an expanding threat that brought increasingly stressful

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<sup>400</sup> Bernstein, B.J., “Reconsidering the Missile Crisis: Dealing with the Problems of the American Jupiters in Turkey”, Nathan, J. ed., *The Cuban Missile Crisis Revisited*, (New York: MacMillan, 1992), 60.

<sup>401</sup> Interview, Dean Rusk, Athens, GA, 21 September 1987; Rusk, *As I Saw It*, 239. The conversation occurred in April 1961 at a meeting of the Central Treaty Organization in Ankara, Turkey.

<sup>402</sup> Janis, I.L., Mann, L. *Decision Making: A Psychological Analysis of Conflict, Choice, and Commitment*, (New York: The Free Press, 1977), 57-58, 74-95, 107-133.

decision conditions.<sup>403</sup> Under considerable strain and pressure, at measured complexity levels the anti-communistic behavior of Rusk and the American Administration produced a Soviet reaction that U.S. foreign policies were attempting to prevent. During pre-crisis the Kennedy team failed to understand that it was their own behavior that contributed to the changing dynamic of Washington's own insecurity.

During the pre-crisis period, Rusk's levels of stress steadily increased and corresponded with measured levels of integrative complexity. Incoming information indicative of the Russian military threat throughout the pre-crisis period naturally presented a direct threat to the U.S. foreign policy aims of achieving military superiority over Moscow. According to Janis and Mann's dysfunctional behavior pattern of defensive avoidance, at the top of the State Department, Rusk took lead in discounting the repeated warnings and downplaying overt Soviet concerns to support chosen policies of the American President. Rusk too, was cognizant of the obtuse force ratio in favor of the Americans. Although this stark reality made fundamental sense for the purposes of implementing a foreign policy of de-escalation, no such decision was made. Additionally, merely by knowing the President's preferences, Rusk emphasized only the information supportive of his superior's policies and avoided information that ran counter to those expectations and preferences. As pre-crisis reporting of Soviet warning was clearly available from numerous sources from 1961-1962, Rusk used the psychological coping strategies of selective attention and denial to assist in dealing with information that was counter to chosen objectives of his Commander in Chief.

Much like Kennedy's staff, U.S. Department of State officers also had to sort through the tremendous volume of reporting. Delays in information processing were inevitable in the presence of significant information overload while the conflicting nature of the reports made the presentation of a clear picture even more difficult. Khrushchev's behavior in Moscow certainly did not make pre-crisis situational awareness any easier for the Americans. Even after concrete information reports confirmed that Soviet claims of strategic parity were not what they seemed; Rusk and the State Department did not attempt diplomatic engagement or develop immediate negotiation options for the President.<sup>404</sup>

Additionally, at the State Department, communication became focused more internally versus externally and new external information decreased. For example, Rusk's consultative circle during the pre-crisis period was restricted to only his State Department diplomats abroad and to the U.S. Department of State in Washington. Under no documented circumstances did the U.S. Secretary of State venture outside of U.S. government channels to obtain advice from unaffiliated entities that had no competing interests. Within the State Department itself, the consultative process was purely institutional inside Washington. Evidence demonstrates that during the heights of the Cold War, the State Department was structured to maximize

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<sup>403</sup> Parks Rusk Collection of Dean Rusk Papers, Department of State, printed materials 1962, Richard B. Russel Library for Political Research and Studies University of Georgia.

<sup>404</sup> George and Smoke, *Deterrence in American Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice*, 130.

control of information while external influence was minimized outside its official channels abroad.<sup>405</sup>

Regardless of the reasons, strategic communication limited the examination of diverse options by Rusk and his organizational staff in Washington. Consequently, no formal diplomatic engagement strategy was ever developed or executed prior to the Cuba crisis. In the pre-crisis period, Rusk failed to make recommendations to the President to minimize the stressful impact of foreign policy crisis on the American administration.

Adequate material also exists on Rusk's account to suggest that during pre-crisis, the officials of the State Department exhibited conformity to group decision making or the psychology of groupthink.<sup>406</sup> In Washington for example, the State Department collectively ignored increased warnings of Soviet dissatisfaction of American foreign policy that contributed to negligence in the development of a negotiating strategy based on American concessions for the U.S. President. Rusk also held stereotyped views of the Soviet leaders of the opposing side that corresponded with Kennedy's views.<sup>407</sup> Rusk's dominant pre-crisis thinking held that genuine attempts at negotiating differences with the Soviets would yield only marginal gains. Considering group pressure, self-censorship, and illusions of unanimity, although Rusk and his subordinates did not always concur with the U.S. President, during the pre-crisis period the Secretary of State did not always voice objections to the direction of American foreign policy. Similar to Kennedy's Administration, the State Department staff also tried to minimize conflict and reach consensus decisions inside internal channels without a critical evaluation of alternative perspectives. As the State Department isolated their discussions inside Washington from external influences, Rusk's staff protected against adverse information by indirectly suppressing dissenting viewpoints and avoiding controversial issues along with potential alternative course of action development that may have countered the courses of action that were chosen. As such, these examples highlight groupthink characteristics that resulted in a loss of novel, creative, and independent thinking that often produce successful solutions; the collective behavior dysfunction of the State Department, in this case, resulted in degraded decision making.<sup>408</sup>

Nonetheless, as the pre-crisis period indicated, conditions of increasing stress, at measured levels of complexity, brought about American foreign policy behavior served to provoke Moscow and accelerate the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union. American behavior that resulted in the strategic buildup of weapons, the deployment of U.S. ballistic missiles to Turkey, and assertions of Washington's nuclear superiority, made the Kremlin increasingly insecure. While Rusk and the Americans viewed their own foreign policy behavior as prudent, the Soviets took defensive precautions against perceived American threats.<sup>409</sup> As stress increased over the course of pre-crisis, the behavior of the Americans had the

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<sup>405</sup> Ibid., 131.

<sup>406</sup> Janis, *Victims of Groupthink: a Psychological Study of Foreign Policy Decisions and Fiascoes*, 15.

<sup>407</sup> Janis, "Groupthink", *Psychology Today*, 86.

<sup>408</sup> Janis, *Victims of Groupthink: a Psychological Study of Foreign Policy Decisions and Fiascoes*, 17.

<sup>409</sup> Lebow and Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War*, 49.

unanticipated consequence of convincing Khrushchev of the need to protect the Soviet Union and Cuba from American military and political challenges. In large part, the actions of the Americans caused Moscow's defensive response to send missiles to Cuba and quickly accelerated the pace and intensity of the Cold War.

## CUBA 1962, CRISIS PERIOD

### PRESIDENT KENNEDY FINDINGS DURING ACUTE CRISIS

The discovery of Soviet missiles in Cuba constituted an acute crisis for the Kennedy administration.<sup>410</sup> On the morning of 16 October after Kennedy was informed of the discovery of the missile sites outside Havana, the President solemnly swore, "He (Khrushchev) can't do this to me!"<sup>411</sup> Kennedy's reaction to the discovery of the missiles indicated severe emotional turmoil, acute stress, and was accompanied by a sharp decline in his cognitive complexity as he faced the most profound dilemma of the Cold War era. If the U.S. President failed to take any action and allowed the Soviet weapons to remain in Cuba, America's staunch anti-Communist policy against Russia and Cuba would suffer an unsustainable setback. On the other hand if Kennedy resorted to force to initiate removal of the missiles, he might initiate a nuclear war with the Soviet Union.

Utilizing the perspective of Janis and Mann's conflict-theory model to frame the U.S. President's decision making problem, while Kennedy determined that he had to act to avert both domestic and foreign policy losses, any action that came to mind entailed serious risks of war. Kennedy faced significant setbacks on every front – the kind of situation that Janis and Mann indicate produces high anxiety. As the American President believed that western interests were immediately threatened by the Soviet Union, Kennedy convened Ex Comm meetings based upon perceived time constraints. President Kennedy's decreased integrative complexity contributed to the decision making pathologies that followed.

Expanding upon the President's dilemma, the basic constraint and major source of stress in the decision process was the existence of three imperatives of American foreign policy that could not be reconciled without making tradeoffs that entailed risking significant loss. These were: 1) demonstrating resolve by maintaining the American position against the Soviet Union, 2) avoiding hostilities, and 3) ensuring that Soviet ballistic missiles were removed from Cuba. The first option effectively ruled out the course of neglecting to address the presence of the missiles, which was initially favored by some Ex Comm officials. The second option precluded the resort to coercive measures to compel the Soviet Union to remove the missiles. The third option meant that the Administration could negotiate but this option would likely force

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<sup>410</sup> Cline, R.S., Memorandum for the Record, "Notification of NSC Officials of Intelligence on Missile Bases in Cuba, 27 October, 1962", in McAuliffe, M.S., ed., *CIA Documents on the Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962*, (Washington, DC: History Staff, Central Intelligence Agency, October 1962), 149-151.

<sup>411</sup> Blight, J., Welch, D., *On the Brink: Americans and Soviets re-examine the Cuban Missile Crisis*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), 367.

the United States to make significant concessions that would be of value to Moscow, and therefore was unacceptable to the United States.

Nonetheless, the Kennedy Administration had no good options or coherent strategy for coping with the crisis, and the contradictory nature of these basic imperatives prevented the President from developing a satisfactory solution that would meet American objectives without risking war. Thus, Kennedy's goal became finding a way to address the U.S. foreign policy problem without resorting to conflict. Therefore, from the outset of the acute crisis phase, decision conditions of intense stress began to affect the President's behavior. From the moment Kennedy learned of the presence of the Soviet missiles in Cuba, the U.S. President engaged in the kind of search for a policy alternative that Janis and Mann describe in their decision making construct.

As stress levels increased in Washington, a range of potential options emerged from Kennedy's Ex Comm advisors during their initial meeting with the President on 16 October: strikes against the Soviet missile sites in Cuba; broader air strikes against the missiles, SAMs and Cuban airfields; doing the first two and launching a naval blockade; and some degree of consultation with allies before the strikes. Notably, consensus was quick to form around some kind of military response as the Ex Comm's principal recommendations to Kennedy were, without exception, options of direct action.<sup>412</sup> Among the less violent military options suggested by the Ex Comm, Kennedy was initially worried that a naval blockade might "be useless because additional missiles can be brought in by submarine".<sup>413</sup> As the American President's levels of anxiety peaked during the first Ex Comm session, in a definitive manner Kennedy stated, "I don't think we've got much time on these missiles, we may just have to just take them out."<sup>414</sup> Then only moments later, Kennedy emphasized, "We're certainly gonna do the limited air strike; we're gonna take out these missiles."<sup>415</sup>

Under the pressure of high stress, Kennedy's immediate inclination was to follow the Ex Comm recommendations of direct military action. In an acute state of elevated anxiety, the U.S. President failed to exhibit novel thinking of his own and Kennedy went along with his advisors. In this case, President Kennedy demonstrated Janis and Mann's dysfunctional behavior pattern of hypervigilance, the pattern of coping with stress that is characterized by an indiscriminate reception to all information and failure to determine whether or not it is relevant, reliable, or supportive. Kennedy's maladaptive behavior contributed to an apparent decision that was unduly influenced by the will and opinion of others. In this example, Kennedy's anxiety led to behavior that was formulated in terms of simple-minded rules such as observation of his Ex Comm advisors and reception to their initial recommendations. While Kennedy's military advisors recommended escalatory alternatives of direct action during the first Ex Comm conference, the U.S. President

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<sup>412</sup> Stern, S.M., *Averting "The Final Failure", John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings*, (Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA: 2003), 68.

<sup>413</sup> Stern, *Averting "The Final Failure", John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings*, 69.

<sup>414</sup> White House Tapes, "Transcripts of Ex Comm Meeting of 16 October, 1962, 11:50-12:57", John F. Kennedy Library, mimeograph, 10.

<sup>415</sup> White House Tapes, "Transcripts of Ex Comm Meeting of 16 October, 1962", John F. Kennedy Library, mimeograph.

agreed to move forward with planning for “more inclusive air strikes and a general invasion of Havana.”<sup>416</sup> When asked about initiating broad military strikes at the conclusion of the meeting, the President stated, “We ought to be making those preparations.”<sup>417</sup> Under continuous conditions of acute stress, the U.S. President’s outlook and decisions almost perfectly aligned to the Ex Comm’s recommendations for escalatory U.S. military action.

In Kennedy’s state of high anxiety, the President deliberated over potential U.S. military actions as the meeting continued, arguing that there would likely be some symmetry between U.S. actions and a probable Soviet response. In this circumstance, Kennedy supported less aggressive military options such as air strikes by contrasting them with a robust general military invasion, the most violent option offered by the Ex Comm. The President probably thought that he had found a policy that solved his needs when he stated, “I feel that there’s a difference in our action and therefore in their response, between our knocking out these missiles and invading Cuba... nobody knows what kind of a success we’re gonna have with this invasion... a lot of... thousands of Americans get killed in Cuba and I think you’re in much more of a mess than you are if you just take out these missiles.”<sup>418</sup> In this situation of acute stress, by using this comparison the President exhibited overconfidence in chosen policies of military action as a form of defensive avoidance or bolstering, Janis and Mann’s identified dysfunctional behavior pathology that helps policy makers maintain their expectations of an outcome with high gains and minimal losses. Kennedy’s defensive avoidance in this case helped him to confront high decisional conflict over perceived disruptive threats and helped to bolster his belief that he would not find a better alternative than the option of military action that was being discussed at the time.<sup>419</sup>

As the crisis continued to unfold, considerations of domestic politics continued to weigh heavily on Kennedy’s mind and the pronounced increase in psychological stress served to influence the President’s conduct of foreign policy. As the 1962 Congressional campaign intensified, the Republicans had warned with increasing vehemence of the dangers of Soviet arms shipments to Cuba. Considering Kennedy’s previous public and private warnings attempting to defuse the issue during the pre-crisis period, the presence of the Soviet missiles in Cuba suddenly became a political nightmare for the U.S. President. What was at stake was not merely a military threat to the security of the United States, but also political embarrassment in the face of Soviet deception and disrespect of the position that Kennedy had defined. Kennedy was well aware that the situation could contribute to his potential loss of the next U.S. Presidential election. To illustrate this perspective, shortly after he was made aware of the disposition of the Soviet missiles, the U.S. President summoned his appointments secretary to the Oval Office. Kennedy queried, “You still think Cuba is unimportant?” The President then stated that his political opposition “will probably be the next President of

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<sup>416</sup> Stern, *Averting “The Final Failure”, John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings*, 68.

<sup>417</sup> White House Tapes, “Transcripts of Ex Comm Meeting of 16 October, 1962”, John F. Kennedy Library, mimeograph.

<sup>418</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>419</sup> Lebow, *Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crisis*, 114.



the United States.”<sup>420</sup> To be publicly challenged prior to a U.S. Congressional election was bad enough for Kennedy, but even worse was to give the appearance of being powerless in a situation of acute foreign policy crisis with the Soviet Union. Therefore, at peak levels of stress accompanied by reduced integrative complexity, the President’s mind was made up: the missiles in Cuba had to be removed to salvage his Administration’s political position.

Subsequent discussions in the Ex Comm suggested that not all of its members were concerned with only the military strategic significance of the missiles being emplaced in Cuba.<sup>421</sup> On October 17, three days after the discovery of the missiles in Cuba, the Ex Comm informed the President that the missiles, even when fully operational, did not significantly alter the balance of military power. The American advisors stated, “the missiles do not significantly increase the potential megatonnage capable of being unleashed against American soil, even after a surprise attack.”<sup>422</sup> The statements to Kennedy clearly explained that the military equation was not altered by the Soviet introduction of strategic missiles into Cuba and it was simply an element of flexibility that had been introduced into the power equation that the Soviets had not previously possessed.

Nonetheless, although the Ex Comm considered the validity of these arguments, President Kennedy pursued the issue of Soviet missiles in Cuba as being unacceptable. In light of the Ex Comm’s counter arguments, at the onset of the acute crisis phase, President Kennedy believed that he had to do something and pressed for military action. During Ex Comm discussions, Kennedy supported his approach from the perspective that previous American pre-crisis warnings to Khrushchev had helped to create a situation in which the United States was committed to act. The President emphasized this perspective as he stated, “Last month I said we weren’t going to accept offensive Soviet missiles in Cuba... but then they go ahead and do it, and then we do nothing? Then I would think that our risks increase.”<sup>423</sup> In this case, Kennedy’s insensitivities to information that might have provided warning for needed policy change caused the U.S. President to employ Janis and Mann’s dysfunctional behavior pattern of defensive avoidance, or more precisely bolstering. Over time, Kennedy only used the perspective that had become comfortable for the purposes of supporting his chosen goals and policies while he discounted opposing perspectives and recommendations from his own Ex Comm.

As stress increased during acute crisis, Kennedy decided that diplomatic negotiation concerning American acceptance of the Soviet threat missiles on Cuban soil at any point after their introduction was politically untenable. Thus, Kennedy’s behavior during acute crisis discouraged a careful evaluation of diplomatic alternatives that presented a counter to his preferred course of direct action. To illustrate, as diplomatic approaches were outlined on the first day of Ex Comm’s meetings on 16 October, overtures to Khrushchev

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<sup>420</sup> O’Donnell et al., “Johnny We Hardly Knew Ye”, 310, quoted in Lebow and Stein, 1994, 97.

<sup>421</sup> Transcripts of two of the Ex Comm meetings have been declassified. Abbreviated versions have been published in *International Security*, 1985, 10:164-203 and *International Security*, 1987, 1988, 12:30-92. Complete recordings are available from the John F. Kennedy Library.

<sup>422</sup> Bernstein, B.J., “The Week We Almost Went to War”, *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, 1976, 32: 13-21.

<sup>423</sup> Stern, Averting “The Final Failure”, *John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings*, 82.

and Castro were rejected by Kennedy outright because he thought that they would “likely lead to no satisfactory result.”<sup>424</sup> During further Ex Comm deliberations on 16 October, the U.S. President concluded that America had to be seen to act as he stated, “this is a political struggle as much as it is a military one.”<sup>425</sup>

Over the course of acute crisis, the overwhelming mass of incoming and conflicting information concerning Moscow’s intentions also caused communication to become focused more internally versus externally and the amount of novel information tended to decrease during Ex Comm discussions.<sup>426</sup> To illustrate, Kennedy and his advisors, more concerned with American responses, never systematically thought through the question of Khrushchev’s motives during initial Ex Comm meetings. No one considered Moscow’s commitment to protect their Cuban allies. Considering this environment, merely by making his expectations or preferences known, over time the U.S. President encouraged and shaped his administrative and intelligence organizations to report or emphasize information supportive of those expectations and preferences. For example, the possibility that the Soviet Union was committed to defend Cuba against an American attack “did not appear in the formal interagency or CIA intelligence assessments that went to the Ex Comm and the President.”<sup>427</sup>

From a cognitive perspective, as the acute crisis phase approached its peak, Kennedy and the Ex Comm increasingly perceived that they were under time pressure.<sup>428</sup> The importance of the upcoming 1962 domestic congressional elections contributed to increased tensions. If the issue had only been that of standing up to the Soviet challenge, it is not evident why the option of military action was preferable to diplomatic avenues.<sup>429</sup> But a strong perception of time constraints dominated the thinking of the Ex Comm. It had been estimated that the missiles would become operational in roughly 10 days. For the Ex Comm, “the deadline defined the strategy.”<sup>430</sup> Why this deadline was chosen, since it was not expected that the missiles would be employed the instant they became operational, can be explained by Kennedy’s stress levels over political embarrassment because of the Cuban issue. During pre-crisis, the President was already on public record that military weapons in Cuba were only for defensive purposes. The discovery of offensive missile systems would raise serious doubts about Kennedy’s credibility before an important congressional election only three weeks later. Thus, the acute stress of time constraints and Kennedy’s perceived political need to give the appearance to the American public that he was taking action bolstered the President’s perspective that a diplomatic approach was simply unacceptable to Washington.

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<sup>424</sup> Stern, *The Final Failure*, John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings, 66.

<sup>425</sup> White House Tapes, “Transcripts of Ex Comm Meeting of 16 October, 1962”, John F. Kennedy Library, mimeograph.

<sup>426</sup> Janis, *Victims of Groupthink: a Psychological Study of Foreign Policy Decisions and Fiascoes*, 15.

<sup>427</sup> Garthoff, “US Intelligence in the Cuban Missile Crisis”, in Blight and Welch, Eds., *Intelligence and the Cuban Missile Crisis*, (London: Frank Cass, 1998), 26.

<sup>428</sup> Holsti, O.R. “The 1914 Case.” *American Political Science Review*, 1965, 59: 365-378.

<sup>429</sup> Hampson, F.O., “The divided decision maker: American domestic politics and the Cuban crisis”, *International Security*, 1984-1985, 9, 130-165.

<sup>430</sup> Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 735.

As American stress levels increased during the acute crisis phase, in a state of decreased complexity the U.S. President continued to insist upon the use of military action. The question of resolve was at the center of the Ex Comm's debate in deciding between appropriate American response options and although Kennedy was keen to do something, he was not necessarily committed to anything violent if it could be helped.<sup>431</sup> On one hand, a maritime blockade would prevent the delivery of additional Soviet military manpower and equipment to Havana while putting pressure on Moscow. Contrarily, an air strike would get rid of the missiles altogether, not merely place increased pressure on Khrushchev to remove them. The air strike option was also a more dramatic demonstration of resolve, described by the Ex Comm as its principal advantage.<sup>432</sup> Kennedy agreed with the courses that were recommended by his subordinates, but the Ex Comm included the strong caveat that an air strike "may force Khrushchev to react strongly and could result in some type of war" that served to give the President pause.<sup>433</sup> Nonetheless, in a state of decreased complexity, both response options discussed by Kennedy's Ex Comm entailed the acceptance of increased risk as any military action had the potential to initiate conflict and could result in widespread hostilities.

Over long and arduous deliberations, the Ex Comm struggled with uncertainty about the effectiveness and consequences of both options. Many Ex Comm members changed their mind at least once during the week it took to reach a decision and the President was among those whose preferences changed.<sup>434</sup> At first, Kennedy and the Ex Comm were drawn to the air strike option, but upon reflection, the American President deemed it to be the option of force that involved more risk. On 22 October, Kennedy opted for the military action of the blockade because it conveyed resolve without resorting to immediate violence and was less likely to provoke military escalation.<sup>435</sup> In circumstances where no good options were available, in the President's mind, the blockade represented a compromise between the imperative for action and the risks of a hostile confrontation.<sup>436</sup> Kennedy used this rationale to argue against the prospect of serious losses in retaining his preferred foreign policy of military action and only then did he begin to relax. Even though Kennedy walked back from the precipice of ordering offensive strikes, in a state of decreased cognitive complexity, the U.S. President accepted the risk that a U.S. maritime blockade of Cuba could initiate conflict just the same.

The decline in cognitive complexity accompanied by Kennedy's observed dysfunctional behavior patterns, serves to demonstrate that the American President was affected by rigid and distorted information processing when stressed during the acute phase of crisis. Kennedy was thoroughly convinced that a show of U.S. naval force to go to the brink of war would convince the Soviet leaders to back down. Ultimately, Kennedy's anti-Soviet policy goals and his personal political need to demonstrate resolve in the face of the

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<sup>431</sup> Lebow and Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War*, 103.

<sup>432</sup> *Ibid.*, 103.

<sup>433</sup> "Final Draft Scenario for Air strike against offensive missiles, bases, and bombers in Cuba", undated.

<sup>434</sup> Lebow and Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War*, 103.

<sup>435</sup> *Ibid.*, 103.

<sup>436</sup> McCone, J., "Memorandum of Meeting with the President, Attorney General, Secretary McNamara, General Taylor, and Mr. McCone, 10:00, 21 October, 1962, *CIA Documents on the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 241-242; Kennedy, *Thirteen Days*, 31, 34, 38-39; Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 738-739; Sorensen, *Kennedy*, 684; quoted in Lebow and Stein, 103.

Khrushchev's threats, was probably a large part of Presidential motivation to commit to American military action against the Soviets vis-à-vis Cuba. By ordering the naval quarantine of Havana, America incurred an irrevocable commitment to the risk of hostilities with the Soviet Union. The option of negotiation during the advanced phase of crisis however, was not foreclosed. The naval blockade did offer the Ex Comm a temporary measure to gain time for resolving the crisis by negotiations. An account of Kennedy's behavior makes it clear that by ordering the blockade, he hoped to offset potential political losses and demonstrate resolve to coerce Khrushchev to remove the missiles from Cuba.<sup>437</sup>

Thus, a combination of strategic and political needs made American military action the most attractive option to Kennedy during the pre-crisis period. As he saw it, military action was necessary to protect the United States, counter the Soviet Union's strategic military move, and compel Moscow to moderate its hostility toward the Americans by removing the missiles from Cuba. All three objectives were central to the attainment of his domestic agenda. Kennedy was absolutely convinced that Washington could not negotiate successfully with Moscow over Cuba without first taking practical action to improve the American military position.

#### DEFENSE SECRETARY MCNAMARA FINDINGS DURING ACUTE CRISIS

The discovery of Soviet ballistic missiles in Cuba on 16 October, 1962, was startling to Defense Secretary McNamara as it confirmed his belief that Moscow's strategic intent was to extend the influence of Communism into the western hemisphere. While it can be argued that McNamara's own pre-crisis foreign policy behavior in Washington contributed to the Soviet decision to deploy ballistic missiles in Havana that resulted in a major escalation of the Cold War, it was his initial perception of the Soviet Union as an expanding threat that resulted in increasing levels of stress. Since McNamara and the administration regarded this eventuality as a political threat to the security of the United States and allies in the western hemisphere, the presence of the Soviet missiles in Cuba brought increasing psychological stress upon the Secretary, who was already predisposed to resist Soviet action. The data set gathered demonstrates that existing decision conditions served to reduce McNamara's cognitive processing complexity and had a significant impact upon his decision making behavior. When the Soviet missile deployment brought a substantial increase in stress during the acute crisis phase, the subsequent decline in McNamara's cognitive complexity led him to assume too quickly that conflict over Cuba was inevitable and that there was no room for compromise.

No other crisis during McNamara's tenure as U.S. Secretary of Defense brought relations between the United States and the Soviet Union closer to the edge of war. From both motivational and cognitive perspectives, McNamara's perception of the threat, the marked increase in salience of time and heightened propensity for conflict placed the Defense Secretary under significant stress. "During the Cuba crisis," reported one of

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<sup>437</sup> Nathan, J.A., The Missile Crisis: His finest hour now, *World Politics*, XXVII, 1975, 256-281.

McNamara's aides, "the outbreak Cold War hostilities involving nuclear weapons seemed imminent and caused the Defense Secretary great concern."<sup>438</sup> In acute crisis, increasingly difficult decision conditions brought about a marked decline in McNamara's cognitive processing complexity that had an impact on his behavior as the U.S. Secretary of Defense. Under conditions of acute stress, the change in McNamara's behavioral comportment was significant as he became increasingly outspoken, aggressive, and his thoughts became preoccupied with overt military action.

At the initiation of the acute phase of crisis, as McNamara faced American perceptions of an increased adversarial threat, the Defense Secretary's integrative complexity levels declined, and he immediately insisted that Kennedy face "unavoidable choices" over military action.<sup>439</sup> To illustrate, on 16 October after the Soviet missiles were discovered, during Ex Comm's first meeting on 16 October, McNamara urged the President to accept "military foundations for our further thinking."<sup>440</sup> Even though the Ex Comm contended that diplomatic negotiations with the Kremlin should be explored, the Pentagon Chief abandoned them on the first day of the Ex Comm's meetings. The Defense Secretary's lowered cognitive complexity levels led to calculations that the U.S. should immediately respond with military action. For example, McNamara forwarded that the U.S. must be prepared for a full military air attack on Cuba and generally maintained this line of thinking throughout the crisis.<sup>441</sup> The Defense Secretary then later contended that air strikes should be carried out not only on the missile sites, but also on Cuban airfields, aircraft, and potential nuclear storage sites.<sup>442</sup> The air strikes would last several days and likely result in thousands of Cuban casualties on behalf of the Defense Secretary's Pentagon. As the stress of acute crisis accumulated, McNamara continued to adhere to his initial recommendation of military action.

As acute crisis continued, McNamara's cognizance of the risks associated with his recommendations of military action rapidly faded as his complexity levels declined. For example, several days into Ex Comm deliberations over course of action selection for Cuba, on 18 October McNamara abandoned previously exercised caution of limited military intervention when he stated that initial air strikes would only be the prelude to a full air and sea invasion a week later.<sup>443</sup> As decision conditions of stress increased, at reduced complexity levels McNamara could not see any way around military action. Along with the JCS, the Defense Secretary declared that he could no longer support solely air strikes: "In other words, we consider nothing short of a full invasion as practicable military action, and this only on the assumption that we're operating against a force that does not possess operational nuclear weapons."<sup>444</sup> As McNamara's integrative complexity declined during acute crisis, he called for military mobilization and even recommended a possible presidential declaration of U.S. national emergency.

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<sup>438</sup> Halle, L.J. *The Cold War as History*, (London: Chatto and Windus, 1971), 167.

<sup>439</sup> Stern, *Averting "The Final Failure", John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings*, 66.

<sup>440</sup> White House Tapes, "Transcripts of Ex Comm Meeting of 16 October, 1962, 11:50-12:57", John F. Kennedy Library, mimeograph.

<sup>441</sup> Stern, *Averting "The Final Failure", John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings*, 67.

<sup>442</sup> *Ibid.*, 66.

<sup>443</sup> *Ibid.*, 67.

<sup>444</sup> White House Tapes, "Transcripts of Ex Comm Meeting of 18 October, 1962", John F. Kennedy Library, mimeograph.

Nevertheless, as McNamara's stress levels increased during acute crisis, the Defense Secretary immediately recommended Pentagon strike plans for full scale war against the Soviets in Cuba. On the first day of the crisis period, McNamara briefly considered a political approach to Khrushchev and Castro but this option was quickly rejected because it was "likely to lead to no satisfactory result."<sup>445</sup> As McNamara's complexity continued to decline, his recourse suggested military action to the U.S. President without tempering his views with alternative options that were expressed by other members of the Ex Comm. McNamara, supported by the JCS Chairman, continued to forward the polarized thinking that the Soviet missiles "should be destroyed without any warning whatsoever" with air strikes.<sup>446</sup> While McNamara was acting as Kennedy's U.S. Secretary of Defense, in line with Janis and Mann's dysfunctional behavior pattern of defensive avoidance, under significant stress, McNamara immediately countered the perceived threat by bolstering the Pentagon's most dangerous course of action to the American President without a careful consideration of the alternatives. Due to high pressure, in his state of reduced integrative complexity, McNamara clearly became overconfident in his recommendations and did not perform a realistic assessment of the risks associated with his preferred course of action. As the Defense Secretary forwarded his recommendations to the President however, he knowingly did so with the awareness that they accorded with his superior's preferred course of conflict resolution: military action.

To compound conditions of psychological stress during acute crisis, from a cognitive perspective McNamara was also aware of time constraints on America's response to the Soviet missiles in Cuba and this pressure served to drive his stress levels even higher. From one perspective it provided rationale for military action, as the Ex Comm was concerned about the readiness levels of the Soviet missiles. Originally, the CIA had estimated that the Soviet missiles would be on launch pads and ready to fire in just over one week. The underlying perception was that the Secretary of Defense and the Pentagon had to destroy, neutralize, or remove the missiles before they became operational and Moscow threatened to employ nuclear weapons on American cities. At the very first Ex Comm meeting on the morning of 16 October, the President acknowledged this time pressure to the Ex Comm stating, "I don't think we got much time on these missiles... we can't wait two weeks while we're getting ready to, to roll."<sup>447</sup> While the question of whether the missiles were operational was a concern to Ex Comm, McNamara's psychological stress levels were significantly increased as the Pentagon had to plan on the assumption that at least some Soviet missiles in Cuba were operational and armed with nuclear weapons from the start of the crisis period. McNamara has since expressed rather candidly that he knew the Americans were playing with nuclear fire, "We couldn't take the chance of being wrong and so we worked on that assumption."<sup>448</sup> As McNamara's complexity declined, in a testament to the Defense Secretary's obtuse thinking, over the first days of acute crisis he stated that there

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<sup>445</sup> White House Tapes, "Transcripts of Ex Comm Meeting of 18 October, 1962", John F. Kennedy Library, mimeograph.

<sup>446</sup> Ibid.

<sup>447</sup> White House Tapes, "Transcripts of Ex Comm Meeting of 16 October, 1962", John F. Kennedy Library, mimeograph.

<sup>448</sup> Hawk's Cay Conference on the Cuban Missile Crisis, 6-8 March 1987, 4.

was no time for debate and that the U.S. must commit to military action to neutralize the Soviet missiles before they could be fired.<sup>449</sup> The Pentagon chief confronted the real possibility that at any moment, millions of Americans might be only hours away from a nuclear attack.<sup>450</sup> At measured complexity levels he accepted the unthinkable risks that were entailed in confronting the Soviets with military action in Cuba.

From a cognitive perspective, increasing stress was caused by the pressure of time upon Defense Secretary McNamara and the Ex Comm during acute crisis. Of note, this was largely due to political issues as the Ex Comm agreed that during the first week of the crisis the sense of urgency was the result of the need to keep the discovery of the missiles in Cuba quiet until the administration was prepared to respond.<sup>451</sup> Time was of essence until the tremendous strategic implications of the situation in Cuba would become known to America and to the world. McNamara and the Kennedy Administration felt that it was important to “control the agenda and keep it from being set by the media.”<sup>452</sup> The consequences of the Soviet missiles in Cuba becoming public knowledge would most certainly have entailed Congressional and domestic pressure to react along with general panic and confusion, all of which would have been politically damaging to the Kennedy Administration. McNamara believed that it would have generated insurmountable pressure for immediate military action and would have impaired the quality of the American response.<sup>453, 454</sup> Thus, decision conditions of pressure and strain continued to rise for the Defense Secretary during the acute crisis period.

In a general atmosphere of an increasing probability of war among the Ex Comm advisors, McNamara and the Pentagon came to the conclusion that it would be impossible to safely neutralize the entirety of Soviet missile sites in Cuba before at least some of the operational missiles could be fired at targets in the United States. In tandem with the political issue of the missiles being unacceptable, as McNamara’s stress levels increased, in a state of reduced complexity McNamara’s recommendation to Kennedy continued to be that of military action. If a Soviet response with operational missiles was to occur while U.S. strikes were in progress, the result would be general nuclear war. Oblivious to this thinking in his state of reduced complexity, McNamara continued, “once we have destroyed as many of these offensive weapons as possible, we should indeed prevent any more from coming in, which means a naval blockade.”<sup>455</sup> In McNamara’s mind, one military action had to be followed by another; although the Defense Secretary did not seem to have situational awareness of his aggressive recommendations, the strategic ramifications of such behavior would have escalated the American situation with both Cuba and the Soviet Union. With an increase in stress, and a

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<sup>449</sup> Blight, J., Welch, D., *On the Brink: Americans and Soviets re-examine the Cuban Missile Crisis*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), 125-126.

<sup>450</sup> Stern, *Averting “The Final Failure”*, *John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings*, 66.

<sup>451</sup> Lebow and Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War*, 107.

<sup>452</sup> *Hawk’s Cay Conference*, David A Welch, ed., *Proceedings of the Cambridge Conference on the Cuban Missile Crisis, 11-12 October 1987*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, Center for Science and International Affairs, April 1988)

<sup>453</sup> McNamara, R., “Presentation to the Crisis Stability Project”, Cornell University Pease Studies Program, 21 August 1985, 12-13.

McNamara insisted that, “Without a question, the administration would have had to act if the story had broken in the newspapers.”

<sup>454</sup> Lebow and Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War*, 108.

<sup>455</sup> White House Tapes, “Transcripts of Ex Comm Meeting of 18 October”, John F. Kennedy Library, mimeograph.

subsequent decline in complexity levels, McNamara's Pentagon recommendations to the President continued to be purely bellicose and highly probable to initiate general nuclear war with Moscow.

Nonetheless, during the stress of the acute crisis phase, amid declining complexity Ex Comm consensus clearly formed around some form of military response. As decision conditions of pressure steadily increased, the risks inherent in the decision to use military force was not necessarily apparent to McNamara and Ex Comm. During pre-crisis, communication continued to be focused internally to the Ex Comm as the information was kept secret, and McNamara and the Kennedy Administration never sought external advice on the situation. For example, on 18 October McNamara stated that "intelligence already in hand is sufficient for developing a well thought out course of action on the alternatives of military action".<sup>456</sup> At McNamara's measured complexity levels, his behavioral patterns continued to align with Janis and Mann's dysfunctional behavior pathology of defensive avoidance or bolstering for paths of preferred military action. This coping mechanism helped McNamara move toward commitment while he dealt with the doubts and internal conflict of how to handle the crisis over the Soviet missiles in Cuba.

During acute crisis, evidence also demonstrates that McNamara continued to be influenced by the psychological phenomenon of groupthink during Ex Comm discussions. In this social context, group members tried to minimize conflict and reach a consensus on future actions without critical evaluation of alternative solutions by actively suppressing dissenting viewpoints, and by keeping their discussions secret, they were in essence isolated from outside influences.<sup>457</sup> Secretary McNamara elected to maintain discussions within the confines of the Ex Comm during acute crisis and went along with the escalatory recommendations of JCS counterparts without a critical evaluation of alternative viewpoints. In this process McNamara's behavior demonstrated a marked loss of individual creativity, uniqueness, and independent thinking regarding possible solutions to the immediate problem in Cuba. McNamara's behavior and desire for conformity with his Pentagon cohort contributed to the poor quality of alternative recommendations that were presented to the American President. It can be argued that groupthink in the Ex Comm led to escalation of the Cuba situation by the Americans through the use of force.

Reiterating McNamara's perception of the Soviet move as a political threat to the United States, this was a major source of motivational stress for the Defense Secretary. For example, at an Ex Comm meeting with the President one day after the Soviet missiles were discovered in Havana, McNamara stated, "It's not the chances of military success. It's the results... I'll be quite frank," he admitted, "This is a domestic political problem."<sup>458</sup> In acute crisis, data set findings demonstrate that McNamara's complexity became simplistic, annotated by thinking that was linear and of singular dimension at the strategic level. As the acute crisis phase progressed

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<sup>456</sup> Stern, *Averting "The Final Failure", John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings*, 112.

<sup>457</sup> Janis, *Victims of Groupthink: a Psychological Study of Foreign Policy Decisions and Fiascos*, 17.

<sup>458</sup> Stern, *Averting "The Final Failure", John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings*, 66.



for example, McNamara's complexity seldom considered different perspectives when considering an issue and the Secretary increasingly relied on one dimensional rules for interpreting events. As the Administration had promised during pre-crisis, "the gravest consequences would arise" if the Soviets followed through with a move in the western hemisphere.<sup>459</sup> After this became reality during acute crisis, rarely did the Secretary mention other alternative possibilities or express diverse views from other possible policy perspectives. McNamara argued that U.S. policy had to be committed to action as pre-crisis conditions had been set; "We said we'd act. Well, how will we act? Well, we must act in the only way to prevent their use."<sup>460</sup> Due to stressful decision conditions, McNamara's state of decreased cognitive complexity again led him to exhibit Janis and Mann's behavior pathology of defensive avoidance or more precisely behavior that bolstered chosen policies. Over time, McNamara only used the perspective that had become comfortable for the purposes of supporting his chosen goals and policies while he discounted alternative perspectives and recommendations from other members of the Ex Comm.

From a motivational perspective the Soviet emplacement of missiles in Cuba caused extremely difficult decision conditions for McNamara because he also perceived the move as a direct challenge to his chosen policy of building strategic arms in Washington against the Soviet Union. As acute crisis deliberations with the Ex Comm protracted, the Defense Secretary believed that doing nothing in the face of a Soviet challenge was too high a price to pay for the planning and expenditure that had gone into Washington's strategic plan at the Pentagon. During the crisis period, considering Khrushchev's previous ultimatums to the West on Germany and the Berlin Wall, McNamara firmly believed that the Soviet Government intended to utilize the situation in Cuba as leverage to reopen negotiations on the German question and agree to remove the missiles in Cuba on the pre-condition that the Allies recognize East Germany. Kennedy's Ex Comm worried that restraint on their part "would encourage Khrushchev to challenge Western interests in Berlin."<sup>461</sup> From a motivational standpoint, American strength and strategic superiority was a tremendous pressure point for McNamara and the overt strategic threat posed by Moscow in light of Washington's dominance served to cause additional psychological stress. McNamara's corresponding decline in complexity produced linear thinking in formulating almost immediate conclusions that the U.S. should not negotiate with the Soviet Union under the circumstances in which the Americans found themselves.

Amid reduced complexity, McNamara's tendencies toward groupthink surfaced again when his behavior conformed to expressed desires for military action. First, as the Pentagon's chief, the Defense Secretary was outspoken in the Ex Comm and offered full support the Defense Department's line of proposed military options discussed by the Ex Comm. As the Pentagon had their objectives and desires for the U.S. defense industry, McNamara probably felt group pressure to conform. Additionally and perhaps more importantly,

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<sup>459</sup> Kennedy's Statement of 07 September, 1962, *Department of State Bulletin* 47, 1 October 1962, 481-482.

<sup>460</sup> Stern, *Averting "The Final Failure"*, *John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings*, 91.

<sup>461</sup> Lebow and Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War*, 48.

military action was coincident with the desires of the Defense Secretary's ultimate superior officer, the U.S. President. Defense Secretary McNamara clearly succumbed to pressure and supported the collective direction of the Kennedy Administration which desired a firm response of military action. Nonetheless, groupthink tendencies contributed to the use of military action by the Americans.

Another important factor that caused a rise in stress for McNamara over Cuba was his understanding of the formal military balance between Moscow and Washington when juxtaposed against the situation in which the Americans were placed. The military balance vis-à-vis the Soviets and Cuba placed the Americans at an overwhelming advantage against the Soviets. Even so, this caused selective attention for McNamara as he conveniently "forgot" about the strategic balance and instead warned the Ex Comm about the employment of the Soviet missiles: "They can launch before we strike and if they're launched there is almost certain to be chaos in part of the East Coast or the area in a radius of 600 to 1,000 miles from Cuba."<sup>462</sup> Regardless of what actions the Americans executed, the consequences of any choice might be a salvo of nuclear warheads on American soil. Sensitive to the need to deal with the Russians from a position of strength, in a state of reduced complexity McNamara held out little hope for diplomacy and feared that U.S. inaction would again appear weak. On the other hand, any Pentagon military action could actively encourage Moscow's decision to execute military operations of their own. During the acute crisis phase, a highly stressed McNamara solemnly stated his excruciating dilemma, "I think that any military action does change the world. And I think not taking action changes the world."<sup>463</sup> For this reason, the American predicament was a source of major psychological stress that reduced McNamara's cognitive complexity and encouraged further maladaptive behavior. When McNamara placed the President's well known anti-Soviet foreign policy goals against a U.S. military balance that far outweighed Soviet forces in Cuba, his only option was that of continued bolstering of a military course of action.

Acute crisis military planning endorsed by the Ex Comm continued at a rapid pace for just short of a week after the Soviet missiles were discovered in Cuba. McNamara's defensive avoidance again became pronounced when it was clear that President Kennedy could no longer avoid making a foreign policy decision on Cuba. Instead of offering a spectrum of options for President Kennedy, Defense Secretary McNamara again proposed only options that centered on military action. Although initially the Defense Secretary was a proponent of a full-scale military invasion, McNamara began to gradually emphasize a naval quarantine of Cuba from Soviet ships. To act with a military purpose, McNamara argued that the Americans could execute three steps: "24 hour-a-day open surveillance; a naval blockade to stop further offensive weapons from coming in; and an ultimatum to Khrushchev warning that any sign of a launch from Cuba against the U.S. would mean a 'full scale nuclear strike' not only against Cuba but against the Soviet Union itself."<sup>464</sup> After

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<sup>462</sup> Stern, *Averting "The Final Failure", John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings*, 66.

<sup>463</sup> *Ibid.*, 91.

<sup>464</sup> Stern, *Averting "The Final Failure", John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings*, 92.

lengthy debate between President Kennedy and the Ex Comm military advisors, the Pentagon's JCS finally agreed to execute the naval blockade option or rather, a "quarantine of Soviet offensive missile equipment."<sup>465</sup> At the conclusion of the final Ex Comm meeting during the acute crisis phase, McNamara achieved a U.S. consensus for the use of military force.

Although disruptive threats were clearly present from the American perspective in the form of Soviet nuclear missiles in Cuba, McNamara looked past facts regarding military force capabilities that his experience as Pentagon Chief told him were of critical importance. McNamara bolstered the Ex Comm decision to implement military action by coping with conditions of increasing stress by convincing himself of the prospect of high gains accompanied by minimal losses. For example, in the American President's major official public statement of the U.S. position on 22 October, McNamara did not have Kennedy emphasize military composition, but instead the Pentagon emphasized the offensive threatening nature of the Soviet missile deployment to the Americans. On behalf of the Pentagon, Kennedy told the press, "Within the past week, unmistakable evidence has established the fact that a series of offensive missile sites is now in preparation on that imprisoned island. The purpose of these bases can be none other than to provide a nuclear strike capability against the Western Hemisphere."<sup>466</sup>

McNamara's decreased cognitive complexity brought thinking that was unrealistic to the point of being catastrophic if the Soviets had possessed hostile intentions. In such a case, any military action would have caused full-scale nuclear war. McNamara's decision to allow of the President to move forward with the policy decision for the U.S. commit to action regarding Cuba, makes it clear that he used the psychological methods of selective attention and denial to cope with critical information to support Kennedy's chosen goals and policies. The Defense Secretary's dysfunctional behavior allowed key American decision makers to believe that the U.S. would not find a better alternative than their present flawed policy of imposing a blockade of Cuba through the use of force. In this case, McNamara demonstrated Janis and Mann's behavior pattern of defensive avoidance by convincing himself that the policy of the U.S. naval blockade could succeed despite sufficient information that identified associated risks and potential for conflict.

Along with the lead decision maker, McNamara's decline in integrative complexity caused constrained and distorted information processing during the acute phase of crisis. This eventually led to dysfunctional behavior that had a significant impact on key American strategic decision making. Because Soviet Union intentions were unknown, McNamara's declining complexity over decision conditions driven by his perception that America's domestic political interests were being threatened by the Russians, brought maladaptive behavior that served to create misperceptions to U.S. decision making when attempting to determine whether or not to commit to taking action on the Soviet missiles in Cuba. This dysfunctional

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<sup>465</sup> Minutes of the 506<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the National Security Council, 21 October, 1962, National Security Files, John F. Kennedy Library, 4.

<sup>466</sup> *Department of State Bulletin*, 4 July, 1948, 54.

behavior placed the American position at increased risk of being targeted by Soviet military action at sea and indirectly increased the probability of war. McNamara's handling of the Berlin crisis decision suggests that while he succumbed to the desires of the U.S. President, he was highly stressed and desperate for his role as the U.S. Pentagon's Defense Secretary to succeed. Much like Kennedy, he was also willing to commit to the risk of conflict, even if it meant eventual war to achieve U.S. strategic objectives.

#### SECRETARY OF STATE RUSK FINDINGS DURING ACUTE CRISIS

On 16 October, 1962, when the Soviet missiles were discovered in Havana, from a motivational perspective it threatened Secretary of State Rusk's basic sense of American anti-communist values. Along with the rest of the Kennedy team, from a cognitive account the abrupt foreign policy crisis in Cuba imposed palpable constraints on time. In Secretary Rusk's own words, the Soviet action was "an overwhelmingly serious problem, and one that we had not really believed the Soviets could carry this far."<sup>467</sup> Rusk experienced acute conditions of stress concerning his understanding of Moscow's intent and this led an increase in the Secretary's perception concerning the probability of war. According to Rusk and the Ex Comm, the U.S. clearly had limited time to commit to action before the Soviet missiles in Cuba became problematic for both military and political reasons. Given the magnitude of the perceived threat to the U.S. and the far reaching political repercussions of Washington's view of Soviet adversity, Rusk's psychological stress increased dramatically and lowered the integrative complexity of his thinking.

The American Ex Comm convened almost immediately after receiving the disturbing news of the Soviet missiles in Cuba and began deliberations on the development of a foreign policy response to be decided by the President. As the acute crisis phase began to unfold, amid American perceptions of the threatening Soviet move, Rusk wrestled with the dilemma the U.S. President and his Ex Comm advisors would repeatedly confront over the coming days: finding a balance between an inadequate response that could, in Washington's Cold War calculus, leave America and the Kennedy administration fatally weakened, or an overly aggressive response that could quickly escalate into the outbreak of hostilities. As the Ex Comm deliberated, pressure mounted concerning how the United States could eliminate the missiles from Cuba without provoking Soviet retaliation, especially in Berlin, which could initiate an all-out conventional war or worst case, a nuclear exchange.<sup>468</sup> If the Americans were not deliberate and careful in their actions, Washington could have an even deeper foreign policy crisis on their hands.

As the acute crisis phase commenced, in an environment of an increasing probability of war, Rusk's stress levels increased considerably as the Secretary found himself at the center of the critical U.S. foreign policy

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<sup>467</sup> White House Tapes, "Transcripts of Ex Comm Meeting of 20 October, 1962", John F. Kennedy Library, mimeograph.

<sup>468</sup> Stern, *Averting "The Final Failure"*, *John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings*, 64. The Ex Comm tapes do not back up assessments that were critical of Rusk made by Arthur Schlesinger and Robert F. Kennedy in separate volumes.

crisis deliberations. In nervous Ex Comm discussions on 16 October, from the start Rusk stated that “hard choices will have to be made.”<sup>469</sup> As decision conditions of pressure and strain achieved their maximum intensity in an environment increasing probability of war, at measured levels of reduced complexity, Secretary Rusk did not perceive that there was any way around the United States taking military action. For example, at the very beginning of Ex Comm discussions on the Soviet missile bases in Cuba, Rusk insisted, “I do think we have to set in motion a chain of events that will eliminate this base in Cuba. I don’t think we can sit still.”<sup>470</sup> Rusk advocated that U.S. allies should also be involved in taking military action on Cuba.

As the Secretary of State’s integrative complexity declined, Rusk recommended two major choices as alternatives to President Kennedy, notably both were risky courses of action. The American Administration could choose to authorize surprise air strikes to quickly eliminate the missile bases or “decide that this is the time to eliminate the Cuban problem by actually moving into the island.”<sup>471</sup> As the Secretary’s perception of the threat increased, in stressful decision conditions Rusk’s initial recommendation included solely options of military action. Only later did the Secretary include the caveat that if time could provide some “breathing space” for the Americans, several diplomatic options might be available, such as seeking support from the Organization of American States (OAS) and potentially initiating direct contact with Castro himself through the U.N. Ambassador.

Notably, as decision conditions of pressure increased, Secretary Rusk suggested to the Kennedy administration the option of a secret approach to Castro to see if he might break with Moscow “if he knew that he were in deadly jeopardy”.<sup>472</sup> The Americans, Rusk believed, should warn the Cuban leader that his country was “being victimized and the Soviets are preparing Cuba for destruction or betrayal.”<sup>473</sup> Rusk stated that the Soviet Union had already released press statements about “trading” Cuba for Berlin. Although Rusk’s novel option did include opening possible negotiations with Havana, during acute crisis the proposal would be seen as a threat to undermine the Soviet Union and was certainly not a harmonious solution. If anything, an attempted American negotiation with Castro against Moscow could have instigated even greater tension with Khrushchev. Rusk’s proposal for direct contact with the government in Havana was not acted upon by the Kennedy Administration; the idea was ruled out as the Ex Comm believed it would give advance warning regarding American intentions, while offering only a slight chance that Castro would accept the U.S. proposal. Further, from an American motivational perspective, the Bay of Pigs embarrassment was still fresh in President Kennedy’s memory and he likely found this recommendation distinctly unpalatable in the fall of 1962.

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<sup>469</sup> Stern, *Averting “The Final Failure”*, *John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings*, 64.

<sup>470</sup> *Ibid.*, 64.

<sup>471</sup> White House Tapes, “Transcripts of Ex Comm Meeting of 16 October, 1962”, John F. Kennedy Library, mimeograph.

<sup>472</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>473</sup> *Ibid.*

Over time, conditions of increasing stress contributed to American Ex Comm assessment of hostile intent from the Soviet perspective while recommending direct military action as the primary U.S. response option. For example, from the discovery of the missiles through the acute crisis period, the Ex Comm spent at least 90% of its time studying the employment of troops, bombers, and warships.<sup>474</sup> Although the possibility of seeking withdrawal of the missiles through diplomatic negotiation received some attention within the State Department, it was only occasionally mentioned by Rusk during initial Ex Comm deliberations.<sup>475</sup> As this example of Rusk's participation in Ex Comm discussions serves to demonstrate, selective attention, denial, or almost any other psychological method was used by the U.S. Secretary of State to cope with critical information and was institutionalized in Ex Comm administrative proceedings.<sup>476</sup>

Specifically due to Rusk's perception of an increasing threat, as his anxiety increased, the Secretary of State displayed little concern for developing peaceful solutions. Increasing his militant behavior during acute crisis, the Secretary recommended calling up 150,000 military personnel and declaring "a general national emergency so that we have complete freedom of action."<sup>477</sup> He also urged further aerial surveillance of Cuba, a reinforcement of U.S. personnel at Guantanamo naval base and in the southeastern U.S., as well as an open commitment to the U.S. backed guerrilla forces to "create maximum confusion on the island."<sup>478</sup> As his levels of psychological stress increased, in a state of decreased complexity, Rusk searched frantically for any workable solution, unconcerned for relations between the United States, Cuba, and the Soviet Union. It seems that Rusk quickly forgot the lessons that the Kennedy administration learned at the Bay of Pigs and the continued failings the Mongoose operation.

As Rusk's complexity continued to decline during the acute crisis phase, he also urged putting pressure on America's allies to cut off air and sea traffic to Cuba in an effort to strategically isolate Havana from its neighboring countries in the western hemisphere. As a testament to his elevated stress levels, Rusk was increasingly hostile as the acute crisis phase progressed; the only time the lead United States diplomat mentioned the possibility of reaching out to Moscow was to warn the Soviets of impending war. In the first Ex Comm meeting on 16 October, in a particularly somber tone of voice he addressed the American advisors and stressed the need for choosing either "a quick strike or alerting our allies and Mr. Khrushchev that there is an utterly serious crisis in the making here... I think we'll be facing a situation that could well lead to general war."<sup>479</sup> No one in the Ex Comm table could doubt that the usually quiet Secretary of State was alarmed and highly stressed.

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<sup>474</sup> Yarmolinsky, A. *The Military Establishment*, (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), 127.

<sup>475</sup> *Ibid.*, 127.

<sup>476</sup> Lebow, R. N. *Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crisis*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), 112.

<sup>477</sup> White House Tapes, "Transcripts of Ex Comm Meeting of 18 October, 1962", John F. Kennedy Library, mimeograph.

<sup>478</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>479</sup> Stern, *Averting "The Final Failure"*, *John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings*, 66.

Interestingly, as the nation's top diplomat, during acute crisis Rusk emphasized the impact of the Cuban crisis on U.S. international relations and kept the diplomatic and military implications of the Berlin issue at the center of Ex Comm discussions.<sup>480</sup> As Rusk's complexity declined, he asserted, "For the first time, I'm beginning to really wonder whether Mr. Khrushchev is entirely rational about Berlin."<sup>481</sup> The Secretary expanded, "Perhaps the Soviets grossly misunderstand the importance of Cuba to this country and are hoping to use American military action in Cuba as political cover for seizing West Berlin."<sup>482</sup> In single dimensional thinking, never did it occur to the U.S. Secretary of State that conceivably the Americans had misunderstood the great importance of Berlin to the Soviets and that Soviet military action in Cuba might have been the result of Moscow's loss to the Americans in Germany.

Nevertheless, as the acute crisis phase continued, Rusk's decreased integrative complexity and the American Ex Comm came to the conclusion that several principal options were on the table for decision. The Ex Comm proposed to Kennedy: attack solely the missile sites; execute broader air strikes against the missiles, SAMs, and the airfields; conduct the first two options and launch a naval blockade; and initiate some degree of consultation with the Allies before executing the strikes. As stress levels were extremely high, these confrontational decisions reflected the assumptions that had emerged from the Ex Comm session during acute crisis: military action, in some form that entailed significant risk, was imminent and all but inevitable.<sup>483</sup>

The political and military perspectives of the Americans were clearly and unambiguously presented in the U.S. President's Ex Comm discussions and caused Rusk to become intensely aware of the constraints of time pertaining to the U.S. response. At this juncture, during acute crisis, Secretary Rusk countered that any military action "involves heavy political involvement... I don't think there's any such thing as a non-political course of action."<sup>484</sup> Kennedy acknowledged that announcing the discovery of the Soviet MRBMs would deprive the Americans of a surprise strike since Havana and Moscow would obviously realize that "we're gonna probably do somethin' about it."<sup>485</sup> If anything, the Secretary of State's reminder acted as a measure to further contemplate the effects of McNamara's Pentagon strike recommendations, but other options of military action remained on the table and each passing day increased pressure pertaining to the American response.

By Thursday, 18 October, as decision conditions of stress continued to remain high, the U.S. Secretary of State again became bellicose and was convinced that the Soviet buildup in Cuba was "not just an incidental base for a few of these things, but a formidable military problem," and failure to act "would undermine our alliances

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<sup>480</sup> Stern, *Averting "The Final Failure", John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings*, 70.

<sup>481</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.

<sup>482</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.

<sup>483</sup> Stern, *Averting "The Final Failure", John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings*, 76.

<sup>484</sup> White House Tapes, "Transcripts of Ex Comm Meeting of 18 October, 1962", John F. Kennedy Library, mimeograph.

<sup>485</sup> Stern, *"The Final Failure", John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings*, 79.

all over the world.”<sup>486</sup> In a state of decreased complexity, Rusk underscored Kennedy’s own pre-crisis warning to the Soviets in September that “the gravest issues would arise” if offensive missiles were shipped to Cuba.<sup>487</sup> Rusk then warned of “the effect on the Soviets if we do nothing. I suppose that they would consider this a major back down and I think they would be greatly encouraged to go adventuring, to feel that they’ve got it made as far as intimidating the United States is concerned.”<sup>488</sup> In his reduced cognitive state, Rusk demonstrated Janis and Mann’s behavior pathology of defensive avoidance as he bolstered his preferred course of action in a situation in which he believed the Americans were bound to act. He continued “We’ve got a million men in uniform outside the United States, and inaction would undermine and undercut the enormous support that we need for the kind of foreign policy that will eventually secure our survival.”<sup>489</sup> Although Rusk subsequently acknowledged the high risks of military action, this passage sufficiently highlights the Secretary of State’s defensive avoidance as acute crisis stress peaked at unprecedented levels.

As Rusk’s integrative complexity continued to decline, the balanced thinking that the Secretary of State demonstrated during pre-crisis steadily gave way to reveal his preferences of military action in acute crisis.<sup>490</sup> Highlighting his polarized thinking toward risking conflict, on 18 October Rusk continued his defensive avoidance and bolstering of his preferred course of action when he stated, “I think the American people will willingly undertake great danger if they have a feeling that we have done everything that was reasonably possible to determine whether this risk was necessary.”<sup>491</sup> The obvious flaw in the Secretary of State’s thinking was that he believed the necessary risk was one of conflict and potential nuclear war. This marked a distinct change when contrasted against Rusk’s view during the pre-crisis period; only one month previously, on 24 September Rusk had stated, “although military action remains an eventual possibility, we must think of ways to solve problem without recourse to arms.”<sup>492</sup> As decision conditions changed, Rusk’s complexity declined and led to thinking that was characterized by a rejection of alternative perspectives.

Thus, during the acute crisis phase, the Secretary of State exhibited the inclination to support military action over peaceful negotiations, similar to the manner in which he had behaved during both the Bay of Pigs and Operation Mongoose during the pre-crisis period. However, as Rusk’s complexity declined during acute crisis in October 1962, he behaved in a confrontational manner that demonstrated little concern for potential nuclear war that hung in the balance. Considering this evidence, Secretary Rusk continued to exhibit Janis and Mann’s dysfunctional behavior pathology of defensive avoidance. The U.S. Secretary of State bolstered the chosen course of military action by convincing himself that the preferred American foreign policy option of military action would result in high gains with minimal losses that were worth the risks associated with

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<sup>486</sup> White House Tapes, “Transcripts of Ex Comm Meeting of 18 October, 1962”, John F. Kennedy Library, mimeograph.

<sup>487</sup> U.S. Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. XLVII, No. 1213, 24 September, 1962, 450.

<sup>488</sup> White House Tapes, “Transcripts of Ex Comm Meeting of 18 October, 1962”, John F. Kennedy Library, mimeograph.

<sup>489</sup> Ibid.

<sup>490</sup> Stern, “*The Final Failure*”, *John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings*, 97.

<sup>491</sup> White House Tapes, “Transcripts of Ex Comm Meeting of 18 October, 1962”, John F. Kennedy Library, mimeograph.

<sup>492</sup> Telegram from Secretary of State Rusk to the Department of State, 26 September, 1962.



conflict and even potential nuclear war. To cement his flawed mindset, while the potential for “further consultation with Khrushchev” was again mentioned during Ex Comm discussions on 18 October, Rusk prematurely concluded that there was no reason to expect that the Soviet leader would back down in the face of diplomatic protests.<sup>493</sup> As Rusk went through the motions in his role as U.S. Secretary of State, he stated grimly, “At least it will take that point out of the way for the historical record.”<sup>494</sup> This was hardly the response of a policy maker who believed in multi-dimensional alternative solutions regarding the foreign policy crisis in Cuba.

In conditions of high pressure during acute crisis, as Rusk’s desire for military action continued, the Secretary of State recommended seeking support from the Rio Pact nations that would provide “our strongest legal basis for whatever action we need to take”, and predicted that “there would be no real difficulty in getting a 2/3 vote in favor of necessary action.”<sup>495</sup> As Rusk’s integrative complexity continued to decline, he suggested the possibility of an American declaration of national emergency and a declaration of war on Cuba. Secretary Rusk again bolstered his preferred policy by convincing himself that military action would result in high gains with minimal losses that were worth the risks associated with initiating the potential for conflict with Cuba. As acute crisis protracted, Rusk’s complexity continued to decline and led to thinking that was characterized by the dominance of a single evaluative rule; for Rusk it came to be the implementation of military action. As acute crisis protracted, again on 18 October, Rusk argued that a blockade accompanied by limited air strikes “would be a pretty good sized wallop, the minimum in any event.”<sup>496</sup>

Although 19 October meetings at the State Department exposed persistent divisions within the Ex Comm, one day later on 20 October, President Kennedy urged the Ex Comm members to come to a consensus at a meeting in the Oval Office. As intense deliberations ensued in an attempt to come to an American agreement on either the air strike option or the employment of a naval blockade of Havana, in a state of indecision over the difficult decision, many of the Ex Comm advisors demonstrated conflicted decision making behavior as they changed their minds at least once during the discussion with Kennedy. Secretary of State Rusk specifically believed that an American air strike would lead to a major Soviet response, such as counter strikes in the U.S. or a blockade of Berlin abroad that could lead to general war.<sup>497</sup> On the other hand, Rusk thought that the U.S. naval blockade option would help to isolate Havana, buy time to monitor Soviet missile construction in Cuba, and allow Washington to decide on any subsequent steps. Again demonstrating Janis and Mann’s specified dysfunctional behavior path of defensive avoidance, Rusk bolstered the U.S. naval blockade option as he became increasingly convinced of higher gains and minimal losses related to his favored course of military action when compared with the air strike option.

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<sup>493</sup> Stern, *“The Final Failure”, John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings*, 98.

<sup>494</sup> White House Tapes, “Transcripts of Ex Comm Meeting of 18 October, 1962”, John F. Kennedy Library, mimeograph.

<sup>495</sup> Stern, *“The Final Failure”, John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings*, 99.

<sup>496</sup> White House Tapes, “Transcripts of Ex Comm Meeting of 18 October, 1962”, John F. Kennedy Library, mimeograph.

<sup>497</sup> Stern, *“The Final Failure”, John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings*, 135.

By this point in acute crisis, the only options on the table were those of American use of military force. While both alternatives involved significant risks, due to the dysfunctional behavior pattern of defensive avoidance, the dangers of the blockade option were minimized and gradually seemed to appear preferable to the Americans. After hours of intense discussion, the impasse ended as Kennedy clearly articulated the American position that the blockade option of Cuba was preferable to surprise air strikes due to associated risks. What Washington failed to discern was that the naval blockade option could initiate hostilities just as easily as the air strike option. The Americans did perceive some element of risk as Rusk suggested that it would be politically beneficial to call the American naval action a “quarantine rather than a blockade” in an attempt to soften the broad strategic perception of the military action. Even though the legal meaning of the two words was identical, the Ex Comm favored calling it a naval quarantine “because it avoids comparison with the Berlin blockade that was a hostile action.”<sup>498</sup>

As Kennedy and the Ex Comm endorsed an active response, Secretary of State Rusk’s lowered cognitive complexity levels contributed to calculations that the U.S. should respond with military action. Sufficient evidence presented during acute crisis exhibits that Rusk bolstered the Ex Comm decision to commit to a military course of action and helped the Secretary of State cope with the doubts and internal conflict that the risky decision generated over Cuba. However, Rusk’s bolstering was detrimental because it discouraged his careful evaluation of alternatives and interfered with the performance of realistic assessments of the risks associated with the Secretary of State’s preferred course of military action. In this case, the U.S Secretary of State demonstrated Janis and Mann’s dysfunctional behavior pattern of defensive avoidance; Rusk convinced himself that the policy of the U.S. naval quarantine could succeed in spite of sufficient information that identified the associated risks and high potential for initiating war.

Considering group pressure within the American Ex Comm, available evidence suggests that Rusk was also influenced by the psychological condition of groupthink within the select advisory group in Washington. During acute crisis for example, while the Secretary of State initially included diplomatic options to President Kennedy, over time he steadily avoided raising alternative solutions as the rest of the Ex Comm centered their discussions on military action. Thus, the Secretary of State demonstrated a steady loss of individual creativity and novel thinking as the acute crisis phase progressed.

Additionally, Ex Comm dysfunctional group dynamics, or what could be considered in this case to be the “in group” of groupthink, produced a false sense of invulnerability during the acute crisis phase in Washington that inflated the American’s certainty that they were making the right crisis decision to pursue military action.<sup>499</sup> Over the acute crisis phase, a large volume of evidence indicates that the Ex Comm collectively

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<sup>498</sup> Minutes of the 506<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the National Security Council, 21 October, 1962, National Security Files, John F. Kennedy Library, 4.

<sup>499</sup> Janis, *Victims of Groupthink: a Psychological Study of Foreign Policy Decisions and Fiascos*, 20.

constructed rationalizations in order to arrive at the decision to implement active measures against the Soviets in the western hemisphere. At the end of the acute crisis phase, when the final American decision was made to execute military operations, it was President Kennedy who clearly articulated his preference for the naval quarantine option instead of air strikes and most of the Ex Comm members suddenly followed suit. Although the course of action had few Ex Comm proponents as acute crisis progressed, only after the U.S. President had formally voiced his preferences, did the Ex Comm come to consensus and offer support to Kennedy and agree to specifically implement the naval blockade.

Considering Secretary of State Rusk's loyalty to Kennedy and the concurrence seeking behavior trends that the Secretary had established during pre-crisis, in Rusk's perception of direct pressure from the President, the U.S. Secretary of State most likely submitted to norms that loyalty was expected to maintain and agreed with Kennedy, declaring that a surprise air strike "had no support in the law or morality, and, therefore, must be ruled out."<sup>500</sup> Notably, Rusk had not previously voiced this perspective during the acute crisis phase and only did so when Kennedy's preferences changed. In making this statement, the Secretary operated with a belief in the implicit morality of the Washington's position and gave no second thought to the fact that the American's imposition of the naval blockade on Cuba was also a military action that entailed significant risk and could result in similar hostilities to overt strikes. Victims of groupthink believe unquestioningly in the inherent morality of their "in group" and this belief inclines the members to ignore the ethical or moral consequences of their decisions.<sup>501</sup> Nonetheless, affected by groupthink, Rusk and the Ex Comm continued their implementation of military action that had the potential to initiate widespread conflict.

Like Kennedy and McNamara, Secretary Rusk was similarly affected by rigid and distorted information processing during the acute phase of crisis, but the U.S. Secretary of State differed in that he steadily became convinced that American military action was preferable to a dedicated pursuit of negotiation and diplomacy with the Soviet Union. Therefore, Rusk exhibited risk tolerant behavior and recommended policies of military action that had the consequences of driving the initial American response to the Soviet missiles in Cuba. Even so, the action of naval quarantine was considered by the Americans to be an alternative of less risk than the air strike option; from this vantage point, Rusk's proposal could be considered to have had a positive effect in interfering with the Ex Comm's preferences for executing a more aggressive option such as kinetic air strikes. At the end of the acute crisis phase however, under immense strategic pressure Rusk recommended military action, and his behavior directly contributed to an increased foreign policy risk of failure in conflict.

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<sup>500</sup> White House Tapes, "Transcripts of Ex Comm Meeting of 20 October, 1962", John F. Kennedy Library, mimeograph.

<sup>501</sup> Janis, "Groupthink", *Psychology Today*, 86.

## PRESIDENT KENNEDY FINDINGS DURING ADVANCED CRISIS

The Soviet missiles in Cuba continued to weigh heavily on the mind of President Kennedy during the second half of the crisis period. During the advanced crisis phase, the U.S. President remained under significant stress due to the continued perception of the Soviet threat, the pressure of time, and the remaining high possibility of war as the foreign policy crisis continued in Cuba. However, the data set gathered suggests that decision conditions during advanced crisis led to an increase in cognitive complexity for Kennedy and this can be linked to having a beneficial impact upon his decision making behavior during the advanced phase of crisis.

While the decision was made to implement the American military maritime blockade of Cuba during acute crisis, it was done so by Kennedy in a state of decreased integrative complexity; the President had concluded that a diplomatic summit meeting with the Soviets had to be rejected. In conditions of extremely high stress, in acute crisis the President was intent on offering the Russians “nothing that would tie our hands” but only something that would “strengthen our stand.”<sup>502</sup> Kennedy’s psychological stress and associated behavior exhibited the belief that a compromise would interfere with the central issue of what he conceived as obligatory: an American demonstration of will and resolve. In the President’s mind, the Soviets had to submit to American strength before any real concessions could take place.<sup>503</sup> Only once the Americans had publicly decided upon overt military action, during the advanced crisis phase, a potential compromise could then be examined.

During the second half of the crisis period, the Cuba crisis continued to cause the U.S. President significant stress. By 23 October the Americans had implemented military action in the execution of a “naval quarantine” to prevent the further shipment of Soviet offensive weapons to Cuba. To enforce what was in effect a partial maritime blockade, the American military footprint was sizable. The U.S. Navy deployed 183 ships into the Caribbean and Atlantic sea lanes while naval aircraft flew hundreds of sorties to visually identify and plot the course of every vessel approaching Cuba from the Atlantic Ocean. The U.S. Army, Air Force, and Marines assembled an invasion force that included more than 140,000 troops supported by 579 ground and carrier based combat aircraft.<sup>504</sup> American strategic forces were brought up to an unprecedented state of readiness alert, Defense Condition (DEFCON) 2. Many more nuclear armed B-52 bombers conducted flight activity and American ICBM missile silos were raised to full-alert status.<sup>505</sup> As decision conditions of pressure led to reduced complexity and the decision to implement military action, the decision makers in

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<sup>502</sup> Nathan, J.A., *The Missile Crisis: His finest hour now*, *World Politics*, XXVII, 1975, 103.

<sup>503</sup> *Ibid.*, 256-281.

<sup>504</sup> Office of the Secretary of Defense, “Department of Defense Operations during the Cuban Missile Crisis”, 12 February, 1963, 6, 12-14.

<sup>505</sup> Atlantic Command, Headquarters of the Commander-in-Chief, “CINCLANT Historical Account of Cuban Crisis, 1963”, 29 April, 1963, 56, 58-85.

Washington did not appreciate the Kremlin's view that this activity was considered to be extremely threatening and served to escalate the situation toward conflict.

Domestic concerns certainly shaped American behavior during advanced crisis as full-scale nuclear war became a very real possibility. After the President's 22 October nationwide address publicly announcing the discovery of the missiles and plans of a military quarantine for the first time, Cuba became an acute worry of the American people.<sup>506</sup> As U.S. military action commenced, the mood of the American public was grim and preparing for all-out nuclear war. A public poll in the field from 19-24 October exhibited that 94 percent of American respondents were concerned over the Cuba situation.<sup>507</sup> Kennedy was clearly under continued domestic pressure as his decisions on Cuba would decide the fate of the United States. At the same time, any of Washington's mistakes would undoubtedly be leveraged against Kennedy by his political opponents. Thus, the U.S. President was under immense public scrutiny with regard to how he handled the Cuba situation.

Although stress levels remained elevated, Kennedy began to steadily recover from his state of reduced complexity. At the beginning of the advanced crisis phase, the President's greatest concern was that a U.S. Navy vessel would be forced to fire upon a Russian ship, possibly igniting war between the superpowers. In conditions of increasing integrative complexity however, Kennedy's behavior became increasingly measured. To illustrate, the American President decided to initiate diplomatic communications with Moscow. In a letter to Khrushchev on 23 October, the President stated, "I am concerned that we both show prudence and do nothing more to allow events to make the situation more difficult to control than it already is."<sup>508</sup> Kennedy began to consider the perspective of the Soviet position and steadily became open to the consideration of other avenues to resolve the foreign policy crisis.

As the crisis period protracted, from a cognitive account the urgency of time pressure remained prominent for the Americans from a domestic political perspective. The 1962 Congressional campaign remained tense as the Republicans continued their critique of the President's handling of the foreign policy crisis situation with the Soviets in Havana. At the crisis continued, the presence of Soviet missiles in Cuba was increasingly becoming a feature of the status quo, making their removal more difficult politically.<sup>509</sup> By Saturday, 27 October, the blockade had done little to stop construction at the missile sites in Cuba and American intelligence reported that Soviet construction crews were continuously working to make the sites fully operational. Khrushchev appeared to be interested in resolving the crisis, but in return for withdrawing the Soviet missiles from Cuba, he insisted that the United States give a formal pledge not to invade Cuba and

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<sup>506</sup> Smith, T.W., "The Cuban Missile Crisis and U.S. Public Opinion", *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, 67:2, 2003, 265-293.

<sup>507</sup> *Gallup Poll*, 19-24 October, 1962.

<sup>508</sup> Kennedy's letter to Khrushchev asking him to halt Russian ships heading for Cuba, 23 October, 1962, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis Files. 23 October, Day 8.

<sup>509</sup> Welch, D.A., ed., *Proceedings of the Hawk's Cay Conference on the Cuban Missile Crisis, March 5-8, 1987*, 121.

remove Washington's own strategic missiles from Turkey. If a compromise could not be reached, Kennedy estimated that the odds of the Soviets starting a war were "somewhere between one out of three and even."<sup>510</sup>

Even in under the intensity of these decision conditions, as the President's integrative complexity improved, Kennedy insisted on addressing the Cuba issue with his top policy makers and successfully considered different dimensions of the problem. Once again Kennedy's advisors were deeply divided. Those who had favored an air strike, pressed again for this course of action as the American blockade seemed to have failed. Some advocates of the air strike thought that it should be limited to the Soviet missiles and their bases. Others wanted to strike a wide range of military equipment and expand the kinetic focus to economic targets. Proponents of the air strike option were convinced that Khrushchev would not respond to an air strike with military action of his own.<sup>511</sup> On the other side of the equation, other Ex Comm officials voiced concern that even a limited air strike would "provoke some kind of Soviet reprisal, probably against Berlin or the U.S. missile bases in Turkey."<sup>512</sup> The advisors who expressed their views against the air strikes were in agreement that any American military action would prompt a Soviet response and result in general escalation of the situation into war. President Kennedy weighed both options but recognized that the consequences of an air strike would be "very grave, and very bloody."<sup>513</sup>

Calculating the risk of conflict and eventual war became a crucial consideration in Kennedy's resolution of the Cuba problem. During the advanced phase of the crisis period, the President again found himself in difficult deliberations on making a tradeoff when confronted by the possibility that the continued use of military force could trigger nuclear war. Although Kennedy had chosen the blockade over the air strike option during acute crisis because he regarded it as less risky, at reduced levels of complexity he did not explore other options before resorting to the use of military force. However, as the President's cognitive complexity improved during advanced crisis, Kennedy developed a growing awareness to the possibility of accepting tradeoffs as a viable solution to the Cuban problem. At measured levels of increased integrative complexity, this approach steadily boosted the confidence of the American President and tempered Kennedy's desire to pursue increasingly aggressive alternatives as he had done previously during the acute crisis phase. Changing conditions and increased complexity assisted in Kennedy's realization that compromise could be highly successful in the context of America's objectives with the Soviets and that Washington did not have to pursue the use of force to achieve U.S. objectives.

As the crisis period continued, Kennedy regained cognitive complexity and was able to recognize the need for negotiations in an effort to come to a compromise with Khrushchev. Even on the heels of the President's

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<sup>510</sup> Sorensen, *Kennedy*, 705; quoted in Lebow and Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War*, 115.

<sup>511</sup> Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 736-738; Sorensen, *Kennedy*, 687-688.

<sup>512</sup> White House Tapes, "Transcript of 27 October, 1962", John F. Kennedy Library, mimeograph, 39, 96, 98.

<sup>513</sup> *Ibid.*, 39, 94, 96-98.

naval quarantine decision on 21 October, Kennedy expressed, “We will have to make a deal in the end.”<sup>514</sup> The most obvious concession that would be of value to Moscow was an exchange of missiles: Soviet missiles in Cuba for American missiles in Turkey.<sup>515</sup> The Ex Comm also discussed the possibility of an exchange of missiles in their deliberations during the advanced crisis phase. Although not part of Kennedy’s calculus when choosing to implement military action during acute crisis, as early as 19 October, the Ex Comm had posed the question of removing the American Jupiter missiles from Turkey.<sup>516</sup> Kennedy’s key administration advisors argued that some kind of diplomatic deal would be necessary to get the missiles out of Cuba and proposed the tradeoff of withdrawing U.S. missiles in both Italy, Turkey, and even abandoning the American base at Guantanamo Bay.<sup>517</sup> The United Nations Ambassador had also urged the President to consider a trade of missiles when the Americans were first informed about the discovery of Soviet missile bases in Cuba but Kennedy did not seriously consider this option until later in the crisis period.<sup>518</sup> During advanced crisis on 22 and 27 October, the United Nations authored separate memoranda advising the President that a missile trade might “help Khrushchev overcome military opposition to withdrawal of the missiles from Cuba and facilitate improved relations with the United States.”<sup>519</sup>

During the final days of the crisis, numerous American Ex Comm members were suffering from the fatigue of crisis induced stress.<sup>520</sup> At the culmination of the crisis period however, as the risk of war weighed heavily on the American President, with increasing cognitive complexity Kennedy became increasingly attentive to threat cues. On Saturday, 28 October, the President insisted on weighing the benefits and shortfalls of an exchange of missiles with the Soviets in a short notice Ex Comm meeting. In facing the critical decision on Cuba, Kennedy’s behavior encouraged an environment of open and transparent communication within U.S. channels concerning the deliberation process in formulation of his final decision. Although Kennedy was worried that Khrushchev’s insistence on a missile trade would be difficult to oppose, with increasing complexity levels the U.S. President became increasingly dissatisfied with continued military action.<sup>521</sup> Once again, domestic and foreign policy repercussions of U.S. military action that might eventually lead to an invasion of Cuba troubled President Kennedy.<sup>522</sup> He told the Ex Comm, “We can’t very well invade Cuba when we could have gotten the missiles out by making a deal on the U.S. missiles in Turkey. I don’t see that we’ll

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<sup>514</sup> “Memorandum of Conversation between President John F. Kennedy and Prime Minister Harold Macmillan, 25 October, 1962.

<sup>515</sup> Lebow and Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War*, 121.

<sup>516</sup> McCone, J., “Memorandum for the File, 19 October, 1962”, *CIA Documents on the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 183-186.

<sup>517</sup> Meeker, L., “Minutes of the 19 October 1962 Ex Comm meeting, 11:00”, and Ball, G.W., *The Past Has Another Pattern*, (New York: Norton, 1982), 295.

<sup>518</sup> UN Ambassador Adlai Stevenson to John F. Kennedy, 17 October, 1962.

<sup>519</sup> Harriman, A., “Memorandum on Kremlin Reactions, 22 October, 1962” and “Harriman to Under Secretary of Defense”, 27 October, 1962.

<sup>520</sup> Lebow, R.N., *Nuclear Crisis Management: A Dangerous Illusion*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), 147. On the psychological effects of crisis induced stress, Professor Lebow cites Alexander L. George, “The Impact of Crisis-Induced Stress on Decision making,” paper prepared for the Institute of Medicine Symposium on the Medical Aspects of Nuclear War, National Academy of Sciences, Washington, D.C., September 20-22, 1985, 16.

<sup>521</sup> “Transcript of Ex Comm Meeting, 27 October, 1963”, 120.

<sup>522</sup> Kennedy’s military advisors and the U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) forwarded the assessment that repercussions of a U.S. air strike on the Soviet missiles in Havana would eventually lead to an American military invasion of Cuba.

have a very good war.”<sup>523</sup> With Kennedy’s rise in complexity, the U.S. President became sensitive to the likelihood that public opinion in the United States and Europe would turn against him if he went to war without addressing America’s own missiles abroad. As the advanced phase of the crisis period lengthened, the President became increasingly aware of the tremendous strategic ramifications that eventual war over Cuba would mean for the world. Even so, he became preoccupied with how he could maintain his credibility and convince the American people that a missile trade was a sensible course of action before the initiation of hostilities.<sup>524</sup>

On the critical Saturday in 1962, the Ex Comm advisors remained deeply divided. The proponents of the air strike option were overtly opposed to the prospect of a missile trade, but other key members of the Ex Comm expressed their support, reasoning that a trade could be successfully explained to the Europeans. As conditions of stress stabilized and Kennedy regained cognitive complexity, the President was encouraged by the recommendation of offering a concession. Accompanying his measured rise in integrative complexity levels, Kennedy’s behavior became noticeably more calculating and decisive. At increased levels of complexity, Kennedy and the Americans agreed on a reply to Khrushchev with the famous “Trollope ploy.”<sup>525</sup> Kennedy would ignore Khrushchev’s 28 October morning message that demanded withdrawal of the American missiles abroad and respond instead to his 27 October message of the previous evening that proposed withdrawal of the Soviet missiles in Cuba, in compromise for an American pledge to not invade Cuba.<sup>526</sup> The President’s official letter in response to Khrushchev insisted on “appropriate United Nations observation and supervision” of the withdrawal of the Soviet missiles from Cuba, but it made no mention of the withdrawal of American missiles from Europe.<sup>527</sup>

As Kennedy’s complexity continued to rise over the course of advanced crisis, he became convinced of the importance of making tradeoffs that would be of value to the Soviets. At the same time, Kennedy realized that the public context in which the Americans offered a concession could allow him to mitigate the negative impacts to his political standing with the domestic audience of the United States. After the formal portion of the Ex Comm meeting, Kennedy and his advisors reconvened in the Oval Office to discuss the contents of a message that would be conveyed to Moscow that evening. The first part of the message reinforced the position contained in Kennedy’s letter to Khrushchev, “the time has come to agree on the basis of removal of Soviet missiles in Havana and the U.S. will not invade Cuba, otherwise future American action is

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<sup>523</sup> “Transcript of Ex Comm Meeting, 27 October, 1963”, 120.

<sup>524</sup> Lebow and Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War*, 121.

<sup>525</sup> U.S. Secretary of State Dean Rusk reported that this initiative was predicated on Khrushchev’s hint in his first communication to the President that the crisis might be resolved on the basis of an American assurance to not invade Cuba. According to Rusk, the “Trollope ploy”, responding to Khrushchev’s first communication while ignoring his second, was suggested by Llewellyn Thompson. Interview, Dean Rusk, 21 September, 1987.

<sup>526</sup> “Letter from Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy”, 27 October, 1962, *Department of State Bulletin*, 69, No. 1795, 19 November, 1973, 640-643.

<sup>527</sup> “Letter from President Kennedy to Chairman Khrushchev”, 27 October, 1962, *Department of State Bulletin*, 47, No. 1220, 12 November, 1962, 743.



unavoidable.”<sup>528</sup> The second part of the message voiced a private offer that the administration would not enter into an explicit arrangement about the removal of American missiles abroad, but that the President would unofficially remove them after the Soviet missiles came out of Cuba. The Americans stressed the need for secrecy with Moscow; the U.S. missiles would not be withdrawn if Moscow made any mention of Kennedy’s promise.<sup>529</sup> With increasing levels of integrative complexity, President Kennedy offered Khrushchev and Moscow an important concession, met American aims of appearing strong to protect Kennedy’s domestic political base, and most importantly, avoided hostilities in their attempt at conflict resolution.

Instead of exhibiting dysfunctional behavior as he had in the acute crisis phase, Kennedy demonstrated Janis and Mann’s functional pathology of vigilance, the pattern of psychological coping that leads to good decisions when the policymaker realizes that certain policies are subject to encounter serious difficulties while acceptable alternatives can be found and implemented in the time available.<sup>530</sup> This approach served to provide a constraint on the means Kennedy would use to protect America’s interests and is among one of the reasons that Kennedy ultimately rejected the idea of ordering air strikes to remove the missiles from Cuba, in favor of the more cautious policy of offering concessions that were appealing to Moscow.<sup>531</sup> With an increasing measure of cognitive complexity, these improvements contributed to Kennedy’s functional behavior that successfully enabled a peaceful resolution to the crisis period.

Aside from particular examples of groupthink tendencies by McNamara and Rusk during various phases of crisis, more broadly the Kennedy Administration successfully avoided groupthink during the Cuban missile crisis period by organizing Ex Comm deliberations in such a way as to institutionalize the exhaustive consideration of available alternatives and the objections of each. Periodically the President did not attend Ex Comm meetings and by absenting himself on occasion he avoided creating an obtrusive presence and associated pressures that come with the positional authority of a leading policy maker. Additionally, almost all members of the Ex Comm changed their views and opinions during deliberations in advanced crisis, counter to the group to which they had previously exhibited consensus. Regardless of affiliation, the Ex Comm generally felt free to dissent from perceptions of a preferred course of action throughout the advanced crisis phase. As depicted by the findings of this project, policy makers expressed wide ranging views throughout advanced crisis, unconstrained by social dynamics or pressure to conform to group consensus.

Overall, according with Janis and Mann, the most noteworthy feature of Kennedy’s behavior during the advanced crisis phase was his vigilant systematic search and evaluation of diverse alternatives that were

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<sup>528</sup> Bundy, M., *Danger and Survival*, (New York: Random House, 1990), 432-433.

<sup>529</sup> Blight, J., Interview of Dean Rusk, Athens, GA, 21 September, 1987, 23-25.

<sup>530</sup> Janis, I.L., Mann, L., *Decision Making: A Psychological Analysis of Conflict, Choice, and Commitment*, (New York: The Free Press, 1977), 62-63.

<sup>531</sup> Halle, L.J., *The Cold War as History*, (London: Chatto and Windus, 1971), 167.

available. In general, information was collected, processed, and consultations were held by the Ex Comm with Kennedy overseeing matters in a forum that indicated the available options and likely consequences of each, calling on the President to make a decision. Kennedy himself actively promoted analytic procedures for choice and executed strategic decisions based on long-term considerations. The President's thoughtful decision process on the range of fully developed alternatives by the Ex Comm during advanced crisis, stood in stark contrast against his obsession over solely the use of military force during the acute crisis period.

During advanced crisis, increasing integrative complexity allowed a number of factors to promote careful analytical consideration of the Cuba problem, causing vigilant decision making behavior in the highest office of the United States government. First, the problem of the Soviet missiles in Cuba was the paramount focus of the President's attention. Second, the consideration of a wide range of response options allowed the processing and analysis of diverse information by the Ex Comm that increased the fidelity of clear choice recommendations to the President. Third, the recognition of foreign policy impacts upon 1962 domestic politics made fundamental choices on the use of military force easier to reach for the Kennedy Administration. Finally, the vigilant processing of information inclined President Kennedy to thoughtfully examine the worst case scenarios that could cause conflict and select contingency options that successfully avoided nuclear war with the Soviet Union.

#### DEFENSE SECRETARY MCNAMARA FINDINGS DURING ADVANCED CRISIS

During the advanced phase of the crisis period, U.S. Defense Secretary McNamara remained under stressful decision conditions due to continued Soviet actions that were seen as threatening, the perceived salience of time, and the remaining high possibility of war with Moscow. Even so, the data set gathered for McNamara demonstrates that the integrative complexity of the American Secretary of Defense increased substantially during the advanced phase of crisis and had a beneficial influence upon his decision making behavior.

As the advanced crisis phase began, with the support of the U.S. Secretary of Defense, President Kennedy initiated the American "naval quarantine" to prevent the further shipment of Soviet missiles to Cuba. At the Pentagon the Joint Chiefs announced a military readiness status of DEFCON3 as U.S. naval forces began implementation of the blockade and plans accelerated for a military strike on Cuba. For the Ex Comm military advisors who still favored quick use of military force, the quarantine constituted an ultimatum; if Khrushchev did not rapidly capitulate to U.S. pressure and remove the Soviet missiles from Cuba, American air strikes would take place followed by a ground invasion. On the other hand, for the Ex Comm members who argued that American strikes would cause a Soviet response that would lead to general war, the quarantine offered additional time for the development of a peaceful diplomatic solution. Regardless of preference, the execution of U.S. military action during advanced crisis escalated the situation with the Soviets and served to elevate McNamara's levels of psychological stress.

Specifically during the advanced phase of the crisis period, Defense Secretary McNamara remained under immense stress from a motivational perspective due to his continued perception of the increasing threat regarding Moscow's intentions. On 24 October, Khrushchev responded to Kennedy's public address on the American quarantine with a statement that the U.S. "blockade" was an illegal act of aggression and that Soviet ships bound for Cuba would be ordered to proceed. Stress was palpable as McNamara and the Ex Comm acknowledged the difficulties associated with employing the maritime quarantine of Cuba. When asked by Kennedy on what to do with Soviet ships that refused to comply with the quarantine line, McNamara concluded, "So it won't be easy, I think we're gonna have our troubles."<sup>532</sup> Interestingly, pointing to a historical parallel that might provide some guidance on Soviet strategy and intentions, Kennedy observed that the Soviets were "now faced with the same problem we had during the Berlin blockade", deciding just how far to push the crisis."<sup>533</sup> Nonetheless, McNamara was under considerable stress as he acknowledged "the practical problem of how we apply this quarantine."<sup>534</sup> Considering the decision conditions of high pressure, at increasingly measured complexity levels, when considering whether or not to pursue and board Soviet ships that had reversed course, McNamara told the President, "It's both a legal question and a practical question. The legal foundation of such an act is confused. As a practical matter, I don't believe we should undertake such an operation, not immediately. So my instruction to the Navy was, 'Don't do it.' "<sup>535</sup> The Secretary of Defense considered multiple dimensions of the operational problem and realized that he would have to accept increasing risks at the tactical level that could result in significant miscalculation.

Nevertheless, as the U.S. military action proceeded, from a cognitive perspective the developing situation imposed the salience of time upon McNamara's decision calculus. As the naval quarantine proceeded over October 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, some Soviet ships turned back from the quarantine line, others were stopped by U.S. naval forces but they contained no offensive weapons, and only a small number were allowed to proceed. Meanwhile, U.S. reconnaissance flights over Cuba indicated that Soviet missile sites were nearing operational readiness. Decision conditions of pressure remained intense and McNamara recommended to the President that U.S. forces be placed at DEFCON2, meaning war was imminent. To make matters worse, on 27 October, a U.S. U-2 reconnaissance aircraft was shot down over Cuba. From a motivational perspective, this caused McNamara's stress levels to increase dramatically due to renewed perceptions of Moscow's hostile intentions. As pressure and tension reached new heights, by 27 October, the prospect of war weighed heavily on the U.S. Defense Secretary. The naval quarantine had done nothing to stop construction at the missile sites; American intelligence reported that the Soviets were "working around the clock to make the sites fully operational."<sup>536</sup>

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<sup>532</sup> Stern, *"The Final Failure", John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings*, 194.

<sup>533</sup> White House Tapes, "Transcripts of Ex Comm Meeting of 23 October, 1962", John F. Kennedy Library, mimeograph.

<sup>534</sup> Ibid.

<sup>535</sup> Ibid.

<sup>536</sup> Lebow and Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War*, 118.

For some Ex Comm advisors, military action was beginning to look like it was going to be the only way to get the missiles out of Cuba; there was enormous pressure to act.

McNamara continued to face the pressure of time under which the Americans had to convince Khrushchev to remove the missiles from Cuba. McNamara recognized that the naval quarantine was only a first step and if it failed, other options would have to be examined by the United States due to increasing political pressure. However, McNamara's increased cognitive complexity levels during advanced crisis led to behavior that encouraged the comprehensive analysis of available information and the consideration of other available alternatives. To illustrate, on 23 October McNamara directed a major reassessment of the U.S. military position against the Soviets and available contingencies during Ex Comm meetings.<sup>537</sup> The Defense Secretary relentlessly pursued comprehensive information pertaining to possible military contingencies, diplomatic negotiations, and even pursued UN involvement with other Ex Comm members. This approach led to an increase in the depth of the material used in Ex Comm discussions to support executive decision making by the President.

During acute crisis, McNamara had chosen the blockade over the air strike contingency because he regarded it as less risky. As the Ex Comm reviewed available contingencies, the advisors that had favored air strikes pressed for them once again when the blockade seemed to have failed. The JCS urged air strikes also on the grounds that the blockade had done nothing to stop construction at the Soviet missile sites. According to the Defense Secretary, "General Taylor was absolutely convinced that we had to attack Cuba."<sup>538</sup> Similar to the Pentagon's approach during acute crisis, the JCS advocated that strikes could be limited to the Soviet missiles and their bases but also offered kinetic options that included a wide range of a variety of strategic targets. In their wishful thinking, the Joint Chiefs were convinced that Khrushchev would not respond to U.S. hostilities with military action of his own.<sup>539</sup>

As deliberations continued among the Ex Comm members, the JCS stated that the U.S. air force opposed a limited air strike, and proposed an attack of some 500 sorties against the missiles preceded by a strike of 1,190 sorties against related military targets. This was to be followed by six more days of intense strikes. This activity was expected to prepare the way for an American invasion that would follow several days later. The JCS advised Defense Secretary McNamara that the invasion would lead to a "bloody battle" in which the Cuban and Soviet forces would sustain "heavy casualties."<sup>540</sup> Preparations for the air strikes and invasion forces were ordered to be in place by 29 October.<sup>541</sup>

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<sup>537</sup> Stern, *"The Final Failure", John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings*, 185.

<sup>538</sup> *Hawk's Cay Conference*, David A Welch, ed., *Proceedings of the Cambridge Conference on the Cuban Missile Crisis, 11-12 October 1987*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, Center for Science and International Affairs, April 1988).

<sup>539</sup> Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 736-738. Sorensen, *Kennedy*, 687-688.

<sup>540</sup> Lebow and Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War*, 119.

<sup>541</sup> "Department of Defense Operations During the Cuban Crisis", 1; "CINCLANT Historical Account of Cuban Crisis - 1963", 39-48.

Remarkably, considering American perceptions of the pressure of escalation and the environment of potential war, project data exhibits that McNamara's integrative complexity steadily increased over the course of the advanced crisis phase. With a rise in complexity, the American Defense Secretary exhibited increasingly measured behavior as advanced crisis progressed. To illustrate, as Ex Comm deliberations continued on 27 October, McNamara voiced repeated concerns that even a limited air strike would provoke some kind of Soviet reprisal, most notably against U.S. interests in Berlin or the American Jupiter missile bases in Turkey. As advanced crisis continued, the U.S. Secretary of Defense became increasingly open about his opposition to continued American military action. As the Pentagon Chief's complexity rose, he was troubled by the probable domestic and foreign policy repercussions of air strikes that would eventually lead to an invasion of Cuba as the Pentagon insisted it must. McNamara was convinced that Khrushchev would respond and reinforced his position at least three times over the course of the Ex Comm's meetings that day.<sup>542</sup> Eventually, the Defense Chief was steadfast in his opposition to large scale air strikes and military invasion; McNamara disagreed with his Joint Chiefs at the Pentagon and the Defense Secretary did not come to accordance.

During advanced crisis, in conditions of increasing integrative complexity, McNamara maintained that the significance of missile readiness was political as it provided the Pentagon with a rationale for military action against Cuba. Specifically the Joint Chiefs were using the issue of the missiles becoming operational to strengthen their case for urgency. It was the most convincing argument they could make against the naval blockade.<sup>543</sup> The Defense Secretary regarded the arguments as an attempt to justify a hardline policy that was palatable to the Pentagon for other reasons.<sup>544</sup> During advanced crisis, the Ex Comm members who argued for air strikes on the grounds that it was necessary to keep the missiles from becoming operational, "continued to favor it after it became clear that the missiles were operational."<sup>545, 546</sup>

As the U.S. Secretary of Defense's complexity recovered, McNamara was able to broaden his outlook and maintain a strategic perspective of the foreign policy crisis situation regarding the Soviet Union. As decision conditions changed, the Defense Secretary supported increasingly diverse alternatives vice military action to help the U.S. resolve the foreign policy crisis. Even though he rarely mentioned alternative possibilities or expressed diverse views from other policy perspectives during the acute crisis phase, as McNamara's complexity improved during advanced crisis, he countered acute crisis groupthink tendencies during advanced crisis by clearly differentiating both sides of the Cuba foreign policy issue and encouraged other members of the Ex Comm to do the same. When combined with better insight, McNamara's rising complexity

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<sup>542</sup> White House Tapes, "Transcript of Ex Comm Meeting 27 October 1962", John F. Kennedy Library, mimeograph, 39, 96, 98.

<sup>543</sup> *Hawk's Cay Conference*, David A Welch, ed., *Proceedings of the Cambridge Conference on the Cuban Missile Crisis, 11-12 October 1987*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, Center for Science and International Affairs, April 1988).

<sup>544</sup> Lebow and Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War*, 107.

<sup>545</sup> *Ibid.*, 107.

<sup>546</sup> *Hawk's Cay Conference*, David A Welch, ed., *Proceedings of the Cambridge Conference on the Cuban Missile Crisis, 11-12 October 1987*.

led him to believe that an alternative course instead of a resort to force should be explored in direct talks with Moscow.

Inclined toward the estimate that the Soviet Union did not want war, McNamara's analysis concluded that continued provocative actions on America's part might initiate a chain of events that could push both sides into a series of escalating actions. For example, the Defense Secretary described the most likely scenario that would result from any U.S. military action as "tit-for-tat" escalation.<sup>547</sup> As his cognitive complexity improved, McNamara expressed the hypothetical that the United States would strike Cuba and have to follow with an invasion. The Soviet Union would respond by attacking the American missile bases in Turkey. That would compel American retaliation against Soviet air and naval bases in and around the Black Sea. As McNamara regained his complexity he stated, "That was the minimum response we would consider, and I would say that it is damned dangerous."<sup>548</sup> McNamara's increase in complexity tempered his behavior and influenced the formation of novel policy approaches that he had not considered previously.

At increased levels of integrative complexity, McNamara supported diplomatic negotiations during advanced crisis; the Defense Secretary argued that conciliation with Khrushchev would be necessary to get the missiles out of Cuba. The Defense Secretary suggested "that we might have to withdraw our missiles both in Italy and Turkey."<sup>549</sup> McNamara even stated that the United States might ultimately have to abandon Washington's base at Guantanamo Bay.<sup>550</sup> During advanced crisis, at levels of increased cognitive complexity, McNamara clearly exhibited the willingness to consider and accept tradeoffs. The Defense Secretary exhibited understanding that the American policy of continued military action was not preferable to other alternatives and would not likely achieve all of Washington's goals. As decision conditions changed, McNamara grasped the conflict among values in his discussions with the President, Ex Comm peers, and Pentagon subordinates. With increased complexity, McNamara was able to understand the sacrifices, distinguish the important differences, and make tradeoffs to support alternative courses of action that ran counter to his role as U.S. Secretary of Defense.

On 29 October, the Kennedy administration allowed a critical political concession, and McNamara subtly ordered the U.S. missiles in Turkey to be removed on behalf of the U.S. President. There was substantial opposition to McNamara's support of Kennedy's policy within the Ex Comm. The American military advisors had previously agreed to the blockade only because they had been promised by the President to use force if necessary to remove the missiles. The advisors promoting military action pressed vigorously for the entire range of military options when the blockade appeared to have failed and undoubtedly they expected the Defense Secretary to lead the way. The Joint Chiefs felt betrayed when they learned that the American

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<sup>547</sup> Lebow and Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War*, 119.

<sup>548</sup> White House Tapes, "Transcript of Ex Comm Meeting 27 October 1962", John F. Kennedy Library, mimeograph, 39, 94, 96-98.

<sup>549</sup> Ibid., 39, 94, 96-98.

<sup>550</sup> Lebow and Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War*, 119.

missiles would be withdrawn.<sup>551</sup> Interestingly, contrary to “in group” dynamics that attempt to minimize conflict in groupthink, McNamara did not waver in his judgement opposing his colleagues’ ideas or the Pentagon’s proposals. The U.S. Secretary of Defense in fact did not seek concurrence on the most important issues that faced the Americans during the crisis and unflinchingly broke from the Joint Chiefs, spoiling the Defense Department’s party line of continued military action.

Although the Defense Secretary had supported military action during the first half of the crisis period, during the advanced crisis phase, decision conditions certainly changed for McNamara. In his advanced complexity, McNamara was strongly opposed to the use of force and was a continuous advocate of American diplomacy at the end of the advanced crisis phase. Instead of recommending U.S. air strikes, McNamara became a close confidant and ally of President Kennedy, advocating the offer of concessions to Moscow for the removal of the Soviet missiles. With increased levels of integrative complexity U.S. Secretary of Defense McNamara possessed a broader perspective than he had during acute crisis. He was able to successfully separate himself from the tactical details, retain the larger perspective, and make strategic decisions that helped the Americans resolve the Cuba crisis peacefully.

Overall, McNamara’s increase in cognitive complexity contributed to accurate information processing during the advanced phase of crisis. This eventually led to functional behavior that had a significant impact on key American strategic decision making. Although stress remained present as Soviet Union intentions were unknown, McNamara’s rising complexity brought vigilant and adaptive behavior that served to enhance U.S. decision making when attempting to determine whether or not remove the Soviet missiles in Cuba through the continued use of force. The functionality of vigilant decision making behavior in choosing to continue to offer the Kremlin concessions placed the American position at reduced risk of Soviet hostilities and directly decreased the probability of conflict. McNamara’s handling of the advanced crisis decision over the Cuba foreign policy issue suggests that even in the presence of stressful decision conditions, the Defense Secretary was able to regain cognitive complexity levels and make measured recommendations that dissuaded American commitment to the cause of conflict, effectively preventing what could have been nuclear war.

#### SECRETARY OF STATE RUSK FINDINGS DURING ADVANCED CRISIS

During the advanced phase of the crisis period, U.S. Secretary of State Rusk remained under stressful decision conditions due to continued Soviet actions that were seen as threatening, the perceived element of time pressure, and the high probability of war with the Soviets. However, the research data set gathered for Rusk exhibits that the integrative complexity of the American Secretary of State increased substantially during the advanced phase of crisis and had a beneficial impact upon his decision making behavior. Rusk’s measured

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<sup>551</sup> Interview, Paul Nitze by James Blight, 6 May 1987, Washington, DC, in Blight and Welch, *On the Brink*, 150.

levels of psychological stress declined over the duration of the crisis period and this contributed to behavior that had a positive impact in successfully resolving the Berlin crisis through peaceful means.

As psychological stress levels continued to remain high, Secretary Rusk consistently raised difficult issues at the center of most decisions that Kennedy and the Americans considered during advanced crisis. Of note, Rusk's pronounced strength was in the area of diplomacy due to previous U.N. experience in negotiations and while a short time in the military had familiarized him to imposing distinct solutions, at the U.N. he learned the diplomatic arts of intercession and compromise. These distinct aspects of Rusk's character, when combined with increasing integrative complexity, proved to be instrumental in the Secretary of State's attempts to provide balanced advice to Kennedy during the advanced crisis phase.

Secretary Rusk remained under intense psychological stress from a motivational perspective as the crisis period transitioned into the second phase. This was mainly due to his perception of the threatening nature of Russian intent as the Americans had chosen to implement military action. At the Kremlin, Khrushchev stated that Soviet ships would challenge the American blockade and Soviet submarines would sink U.S. Navy destroyers if they interfered with Soviet shipping. The Chairman warned that he would not be the first to fire a nuclear weapon but "if the U.S. insisted on a war, then we'll meet together in hell."<sup>552</sup> At the very beginning of the advanced crisis phase on 23 October, another Moscow official stated, "our captains have an order to continue their course to Cuba, for the actions of the Americans are unlawful."<sup>553</sup>

Considering the strained diplomatic atmosphere, decision conditions for the Americans in the Ex Comm were arguably the tensest of the crisis period. Although the American announcement of the "naval quarantine" was in essence an execution order of U.S. military action against the Soviets, Secretary Rusk preferred this course over the other more aggressive options of armed force because it was seen to entail less risk while leaving room for political maneuver. Because it contained no ultimatum or direct invasion threat, the blockade encouraged the "vague illusion" that the Americans might only momentarily interfere with maritime shipments and eventually accommodate the presence of the Soviet missiles in Cuba.<sup>554</sup> While the quarantine was a less aggressive alternative to overt air strikes, the foreign policy choice did entail a massive U.S. military foot print of 183 ships at sea in the Caribbean that brought significant risk of miscalculation to American decision makers.<sup>555</sup>

In an environment of significant pressure in Washington, extensive Ex Comm discussions were held on the topic of the naval quarantine and the rules of engagement for exactly how the U.S. Navy would handle

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<sup>552</sup> *The Soviet Bloc Armed Forces and the Cuban Crisis*, 57; Knox, W.E., "Close Up of Khrushchev During a Crisis", *New York Times Magazine*, 18 November, 1962.

<sup>553</sup> *Moscow Conference*, 79-80.

<sup>554</sup> Troyanovsky, O., "The Caribbean Crisis", 150-151.

<sup>555</sup> Lebow and Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War*, 118.



approaching Soviet ships. The American advisors decided that the initial U.S. objective was to intercept approaching Soviet vessels that were loaded with offensive weapons, even ships that had already turned around. At measured levels of increasing complexity, Rusk protested that the downsides of seizing a ship that had reversed course far outweighed the advantages. The Secretary stated, “The diplomatic problem is that from the Soviet point of view they’re gonna be as sensitive as a boil and think that we’re trying to capture and analyze their missiles and warheads. Now the purpose of the blockade is to keep ‘em out of Cuba. This adds a very important element into it.”<sup>556</sup> Even in stressful decision conditions, the Secretary of State’s behavior was considerate of a diplomatic perspective of the situation. As Rusk’s complexity increased, in this case he exhibited differentiated thinking in recognition of the alternate Soviet perspective of the blockade situation. As decision conditions changed during advanced crisis, Rusk steadily demonstrated the ability to recognize multiple alternatives or different dimensions of situations and accept them as being relevant, legitimate, and justifiable.<sup>557</sup> This example also serves to demonstrate that Rusk displayed empathy for the Soviets and appeared to be capable of seeing Soviet actions from the perspective of Moscow’s own insecurity.

As Rusk’s integrative complexity levels increased, he became adept at tempering his recommendations with alternative thinking. To illustrate, as Soviet ships were advancing toward the blockade line and President Kennedy became increasingly stressed over the increasingly likelihood of a firefight, Secretary Rusk stated, “Things could get difficult, but a good reason to send a letter to Mr. Khrushchev, tell him to turn ‘em around – not to challenge it.”<sup>558</sup> In this case, although Rusk was under considerable stress of what appeared to be impending hostilities, his behavior recognized more than one dimension of the blockade situation. Instead of offering further advice on the military action, Secretary Rusk recommended a diplomatic avenue to diffuse the situation before hostilities could occur, making it clear that he viewed the blockade situation from a different perspective.<sup>559</sup> An improvement in Rusk’s complexity enabled the U.S. Secretary of State to recognize alternatives and quickly grasp their conditions for application.

Despite Soviet threats, Rusk’s alternative recommendation had been timely. Within hours of learning about the blockade, Moscow ordered the Russian ships enroute to Cuba to stop. All sixteen vessels with military cargo, including five carrying missiles, and one suspected of transporting nuclear warheads, turned back after the quarantine was announced and before it went into effect.<sup>560</sup> Two of the ships that turned back early had been prime targets for U.S. Navy boarding, one of which was believed by the Americans to be carrying nuclear weapons. Nonetheless, Secretary Rusk’s increasing cognitive complexity allowed him to discern the Soviet

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<sup>556</sup> White House Tapes, “Transcript of Ex Comm Meeting 27 October 1962”, John F. Kennedy Library, mimeograph, 39, 94, 96-98.

<sup>557</sup> Baker-Brown, G., Ballard, E. J., Bluck, S., deVries, B., Suedfeld, P., Tetlock, P. E. The conceptual/integrative complexity scoring manual, *Motivation and personality: Handbook of thematic content analysis*, edited by C.P. Smith, 1992, 400-418.

<sup>558</sup> White House Tapes, “Transcripts of Ex Comm Meeting of 27 October, 1962”, John F. Kennedy Library, mimeograph.

<sup>559</sup> Baker-Brown, G., Ballard, E. J., Bluck, S., deVries, B., Suedfeld, P., Tetlock, P. E. The conceptual/integrative complexity scoring manual, *Motivation and personality: Handbook of thematic content analysis*, edited by C.P. Smith, 1992, 400-418.

<sup>560</sup> Blight, J.G., Welch, D.A., *On the Brink: Americans and Soviets Reexamine the Cuban Missile Crisis*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1989), 306.

perspective of the situation during advanced crisis. As the U.S. military blockade of Cuba progressed, Rusk provided the President advice that was instrumental in avoiding hostilities in an extremely tense situation.

The Ex Comm strategy of the quarantine was risky. In the hope of achieving concessions from Khrushchev for removal of the missiles from Cuba, the Americans had raised the threat of war with the Soviet Union during acute crisis. The Kennedy Administration assumed that Khrushchev was as anxious to avoid a military clash as Washington was. If Khrushchev intended to use the missile deployment to Cuba as a mechanism to attack the United States, American antagonism would backfire. The Ex Comm clearly hoped that the military action of the naval blockade would deter a Soviet attack. Military action by either side could set in motion an unstoppable pattern of escalation. For these reasons, increasing integrative complexity among Rusk and the American decision makers allowed them to identify multiple perspectives and dimensions of their problematic course of action, discern deficiencies to develop improved alternative courses of action, and thereby make significant contributions toward avoiding major conflict.

Although Secretary Rusk had recommended military action during acute crisis phase, Rusk became an avid proponent of diplomatic alternatives as his integrative complexity improved. For example, during the second phase of the crisis, the American Secretary advocated against continued military action and air strikes. Rusk voiced his concern that even a limited air strike would provoke a Soviet reprisal of some kind.<sup>561</sup> The Secretary also thought that Khrushchev would have “serious problems controlling his own Politburo” which served to give Kennedy pause.<sup>562</sup> Considering Rusk’s pronounced strength of diplomacy and experience in negotiations at the U.N., rather than issuing an ultimatum with kinetic strikes, during advanced crisis Rusk’s objective was to freeze the situation by continuing the naval quarantine and send U.N. monitoring teams to Havana in an effort to come to a compromise. As Secretary Rusk recovered complexity levels, his behavior proved to be instrumental in the Secretary of State’s attempts to provide balanced advice to Kennedy during the advanced crisis phase.

Secretary Rusk’s rise in cognitive complexity during advanced crisis certainly permitted him to capitalize on the diplomatic arts of verbal persuasion, tactical maneuvering, and endgame compromise that he had learned earlier in his career. As the Secretary’s complexity steadily increased, he insisted on working with the U.N. in search of a compromise. Rusk also devised elaborate private plans on multiple strategic issues with President Kennedy in private that formulated an American diplomatic strategy to ensure a resolution to the Cuba crisis without resorting to military action.

In discussions with President Kennedy on 24 October, with increasing complexity, Secretary Rusk agreed to engage his State Department colleagues in Ankara regarding a missile trade. Secretary Rusk again proposed

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<sup>561</sup> Lebow and Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War*, 119.

<sup>562</sup> Interview, Dean Rusk, Atlanta, GA, 21 September 1987, quoted in Lebow and Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War*, 119.

the U.S. withdrawal of Washington's Jupiter missiles from Turkey. Unsurprisingly, NATO partners were diametrically opposed to the American missile removal and as the political consequences for Turkey were assessed to be "grave for the appeasement of an enemy;" the State Department's recommendation to Secretary Rusk was entirely negative.<sup>563</sup> Nonetheless, contrary to acute crisis, Rusk and his State Department advisors did not leave the political issue of U.S. missiles abroad unresolved. Rusk thought that a missile trade could be successfully explained to the Europeans and subsequently, the State Department advised that the American missiles could be removed on a "strictly secret basis with the Soviets."<sup>564</sup> As the U.S. Secretary of State's complexity increased, Rusk perceived the importance of U.S. missiles abroad as a potential concession in the greater perspective of the crisis. With improved complexity Rusk believed that removal of the Jupiter missiles would be palatable for both Turkey and the European allies with the right approach; one that was politically quiet. Improved complexity contributed to Rusk's willingness to execute the desires of the American President and helped achieve an objective that had a significant strategic impact on the crisis during the advanced phase.

In the final days of advanced crisis, with increased complexity Rusk's negotiations with NATO and the U.N. opened the possibility for the American Ex Comm agreement to reply to successive letters by Khrushchev with the famous "Trollope ploy."<sup>565</sup> Kennedy would ignore Khrushchev's 27 October morning letter that demanded the withdrawal of the U.S. missiles in Turkey and respond instead to his message of 26 October, the previous evening that proposed withdrawal of the Soviet missiles in Cuba in return for an American pledge not to invade Cuba.<sup>566</sup> The first part of the American response was simple, "No Soviet missiles in Cuba, and no U.S. invasion; otherwise future American action was unavoidable."<sup>567</sup> With increased complexity and diplomatic acumen, Rusk proposed that Kennedy should express that the U.S. administration would not enter into an explicit arrangement regarding the U.S. missiles in Turkey, but that the American President was implicitly determined to remove them and would do so after the Soviet missiles came out of Cuba. Rusk's suggestion was quickly accepted by the Ex Comm and approved by the President in secret.<sup>568</sup>

On the final day of the crisis, as the U.S. Secretary of State's complexity continued to improve, Rusk devised yet another alternative in his attempts to pursue a peaceful solution to the Cuba crisis. Secretary Rusk worked secretly with President Kennedy using his U.N. connections to create an alternative plan in case the Soviet Union failed to accept the terms outlined in his proposal to Moscow. To forestall the escalation of a Soviet-American war, Kennedy was willing to consider ending the crisis on Khrushchev's most recent terms

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<sup>563</sup> Doc. #779, 25 October, 1962, Paris 506; and #780, 26 October, 1962, Ankara 587, Cuban Missile Crisis File, National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.

<sup>564</sup> "American Ambassador to Turkey, Raymond Hare to Secretary of State", 26 October 1962.

<sup>565</sup> Interview, Dean Rusk, 21 September 1987. Rusk reported that this initiative was predicated on Khrushchev's hint in his first communication to the president that the crisis might be resolved on the basis of an American assurance not to invade Cuba. According to Rusk, the "Trollope ploy" was proposed to respond to Khrushchev's first communication while ignoring his second.

<sup>566</sup> "Letter from Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy", 26 October 1962, *Department of State Bulletin* 69, No. 1795, 19 November 1973, 640-643.

<sup>567</sup> Bundy, M., *Danger and Survival: Choices About the Bomb in the First Fifty Years*, (New York: Random House, 1988), 434.

<sup>568</sup> Lebow and Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War*, 122.

in the 27 October morning letter: an American pledge not to invade Cuba and a public missile trade.<sup>569</sup> With increased complexity, the two Americans did not want to let the U.S. missiles in Turkey become an obstacle to the removal of the missile sites in Cuba.<sup>570</sup>

In conditions of recovered integrative complexity, Rusk again leveraged his experience at the U.N. and suggested a face-saving compromise for Kennedy to agree to Khrushchev's demand for a public missile exchange, dubbed the "Cordier ploy." Rather than replying directly to Khrushchev, Rusk proposed that Kennedy should agree to a proposal containing Moscow's conditions that U.N. Secretary General U Thant would be asked to put forward on behalf of the United Nations. Andrew Cordier, who had only recently left the U.N. and was close to the U Thant, could be used to approach the secretary general. Kennedy agreed to Rusk's proposal and the President dictated a short draft proposal calling on the two sides to withdraw their missiles in Turkey and Cuba. While this alternative was not used as Khrushchev agreed to the "Trollope ploy" the next day, as Rusk's integrative complexity levels improved, in this case he exhibited a dynamic approach toward alternative course of action development. Rusk certainly recognized alternative perspectives and different dimensions of the Cuban problem and in his proposed alternative solution he accepted the aspects as being relevant, legitimate, and justifiable.<sup>571</sup>

Contrary to "in group" dynamics that fit the definition of groupthink for Rusk during acute crisis, the Secretary's behavior performance during advanced crisis was distinctly diverse. There is little evidence to indicate that Rusk's behavior was impacted by Ex Comm social pressures. He did not waver in his judgement of his Ex Comm colleagues' bellicose ideas or the Pentagon's JCS aggressive proposals in favor of air strikes. The U.S. Secretary of State did not seek concurrence or acceptance from the Ex Comm group on the paramount issues that faced President Kennedy during advanced crisis. Close coordination, innovative thinking, and the dynamic development of alternative solutions underscored reasoning counter to the mindset of groupthink and contributed to improved Secretary Rusk's decision making during advanced crisis.

Although the U.S. Secretary of State had supported military action during the first half of the crisis period, during the advanced crisis phase, decision conditions certainly changed for Rusk. In his advanced complexity, Secretary Rusk was strongly opposed to the use of force and was a strong advocate of American diplomacy both in public and private during the entirety of the advanced crisis phase. Instead of recommending U.S. air strikes, Rusk advocated for offering concessions to Moscow for the removal of the Soviet missiles. With increased levels of integrative complexity the U.S. Secretary of State exhibited a broader strategic perspective than he had during acute crisis; one that could only come with manageable stress and somewhat routine levels of cognitive complexity. Throughout the most intense portion of advanced crisis, Rusk was forthright,

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<sup>569</sup> Ibid., 127.

<sup>570</sup> Interview, Dean Rusk, Athens, GA, 21 September 1987; Dean Rusk to James G. Blight, 25 February, 1987.

<sup>571</sup> Baker-Brown, G., Ballard, E. J., Bluck, S., deVries, B., Suedfeld, P., Tetlock, P. E. The conceptual/integrative complexity scoring manual, *Motivation and personality: Handbook of thematic content analysis*, edited by C.P. Smith, 1992, 400-418.

decisive, and exhibited vigilant decision making behavior. He was able to successfully separate himself from minor tactical details, retain the larger perspective, and make strategic decisions that helped President Kennedy resolve the Cuba crisis peacefully.

Overall, Rusk's increase in cognitive complexity contributed to accurate information processing during the advanced phase of crisis. This eventually led to functional behavior that had a significant impact on key American strategic decision making. Although stress remained present as Soviet Union intentions were unknown, Rusk's rising complexity was accompanied by Janis and Mann's description of the functional behavior pathology of vigilance or adaptive behavior that served to enhance U.S. decision making when attempting to determine whether or not remove the Soviet missiles in Cuba through the continued use of force. The functionality of Rusk's vigilant decision making behavior in choosing to offer Moscow concessions placed the American position at reduced risk of Soviet hostilities and contributed to decreasing the probability of conflict. Rusk's handling of advanced crisis diplomatic negotiations that took place on Cuba foreign policy issues suggests that even in the presence of stressful decision conditions, the U.S. Secretary of State was able to regain integrative complexity levels and make measured recommendations to President Kennedy that dissuaded American commitment to hostilities and promoted a peaceful resolution to the crisis.

Finally, it is indeed intriguing that Kennedy hired Rusk as a number two candidate for U.S. Secretary of State and held Rusk in mild disdain prior to the conflict over Cuba. Although their pre-crisis relationship wasn't the best, Rusk ended up being one of Kennedy's closest advisors who proposed peaceful alternatives in advanced crisis and helped the President avert nuclear war. At times, Rusk was one of the few Ex Comm members to find a counterbalance to what could have been a tremendous international disaster if Washington had continued its commitment to military action.

In review of the protracted crisis period, according with Janis and Mann's functional behavior pathology, the most noteworthy feature of American leadership behavior over time was the Kennedy Administration's systematic search and evaluation of alternatives in the presence of highly stressful decision conditions. Over the length of crisis, as complexity levels steadily increased, information was effectively collected, processed, and productive consultations were held by the members of the Ex Comm, including President Kennedy. The Ex Comm presented information to Kennedy in a structured forum that indicated the available options and likely consequences of each, calling on the President to make a decision after deliberations were held. Throughout the crisis period, Kennedy himself actively promoted analytic procedures for choice and with the help of increased integrative complexity, the President was able to make strategic decisions based on long-term considerations that successfully solved the foreign policy crisis over Cuba with the Soviet Union.

## CONCLUSIONS – THE RELATIONSHIP OF COGNITIVE COMPLEXITY TO QUALITY OF DECISION MAKING AND OUTCOME

This case effectively demonstrates that as stress increased and complexity declined during the acute phase of the 1962 Cuba crisis period, without exception, Janis and Mann's dysfunctional behavior pathologies were observed in the key American leaders. Under these conditions psychological stress had the consequences of contributing to poor decisions that were observed that could have led to nuclear war. However, as stress levels declined and complexity increased from the acute to advanced phase of the Cuba crisis period, Janis and Mann's specified functional behavior was observed that resulted in a peaceful outcome. In these conditions, psychological stress had the consequences of contributing to good decisions.

In summary analysis of this case study, higher psychological stress levels resulted in decreased policy maker performance while decreased stress levels produced an increase in decision maker performance. Taking these findings into consideration, this case successfully demonstrates the links between decision conditions of stress, policy maker integrative complexity, and subsequent decision making behavior in relation to Janis and Mann's motivational model of conflict decision making. The outcome is beneficial in two ways:

1. The results of this case exhibits that decision maker stress is related to the behavior that Janis and Mann associate with motivated bias.
2. Evaluation of this case also serves to illustrate that integrative complexity can be used as a useful independent measure of stress. The measured decrements in complexity, when paired with examples of Janis and Mann's dysfunctional behavior patterns, illustrate a useful data point using integrative complexity as an independent measure of stress. Additionally, the measured increases in complexity, when coupled with examples of Janis and Mann's functional behavior pathologies, illustrate another useful data point using integrative complexity an independent measure of stress.

In concert, these data points can be used to construct a functional independent measure of stress utilizing the measure of integrative complexity. An independent measure of decision conditions will be useful in the reformulation of Janis and Mann's crisis model of decision making to circumvent the problem of circularity found within the construct. This will enable political scientists to perform better evaluations of the Janis and Mann conflict model of decision making in the future.

## **CHAPTER 7 – REFORMULATION OF JANIS AND MANN**

While the Janis and Mann conflict-theory model is a valuable motivational construct, the identified problem of circularity needs to be addressed. The main objective of this chapter will be to call to attention demonstrated research links between stress, complexity, and behavior that enable an independent measure of decision conditions, and then present a reformulation of the Janis and Mann motivational decision making construct to include an independent measure of stress. After this project's evaluation of integrative complexity as an effective independent measure of psychological stress in the preceding cases of foreign policy crisis, it is now possible to reformulate Janis and Mann's decision making model to expunge circularity and come away with a more effective model. This addition will be a positive contribution to the study of conflict decision making when using the Janis and Mann construct.

### **FOUNDATIONS FOR RE-FORMULATION OF JANIS AND MANN'S DECISION MAKING MODEL**

In each of Janis and Mann's identified behavioral pathologies, the paradigm of their conflict model assigns observed behavior patterns and resultant decisions to be the cause of conditional stress associated with the decision making conditions, but this may not always be the case. As indicated previously, Janis and Mann's assumption of conditional stress being the cause of certain behavior paths is the identified flaw in their conflict model construct. Clearly, various degrees of psychological stress that manifest throughout different stages of foreign policy crisis situations are individual policy maker dependent.

To avoid a tautology it is necessary for researchers to be able to independently gauge psychological stress levels as leaders approach important crisis decisions. Developing an independent understanding of a policy maker's psychological stress levels would help expunge Janis and Mann's present circularity and assist researchers in a more precise evaluation of the Janis and Mann decision making construct. This approach presents sufficient grounds for a reformulation of Janis and Mann's conflict decision making model to include an independent measure of stress.

### **DEMONSTRATED LINKS BETWEEN STRESS, COMPLEXITY, AND BEHAVIOR**

The measure of cognitive complexity has been found to be an effective independent measure of stress. When paired with examples of Janis and Mann's behavior pathologies in case studies of this project, the study of individual policy maker complexity proves to be a useful measure of the unique individual psychological decision making conditions of foreign policy crisis. More specifically, when measured decreases in complexity are associated with Janis and Mann's dysfunctional behavior patterns and increases in complexity are coupled with Janis and Mann's functional behavior pathologies, this effectively serves to exhibit the validity of integrative complexity as an independent measure of stress.

Calling attention to the links that have been established between stress, complexity, and behavior, this project's case studies effectively served to answer the project research question:

"Is decision making stress related to the behavior that Janis and Mann associate with motivated bias?"

Low integrative complexity sometimes occurs under high stress and often results in the manifestation of dysfunctional behavior pathologies that Janis and Mann specify. It is important to note that low complexity can also occur for other reasons because integrative complexity in information processing varies among individual policy makers. Depending upon personality, some leaders of foreign policy routinely score lower than others when measured on average integrative complexity processing capabilities because they are not especially bright or thoughtful. However, when low complexity leads to dysfunctional behavior pathologies, it is possible to leverage the Janis and Mann conflict model of decision making to determine the effects of motivated bias.

To recapitulate project case study findings, each foreign policy crisis that was studied adequately demonstrates that as stress increased and integrative complexity declined, policy maker behavior pathologies were observed that Janis and Mann associate with motivated bias. The American crises that took place in Berlin and Cuba demonstrate that as conflicted decisions involving the balance between peace and war provoked significant stress during acute crisis, American policy maker integrative complexity levels declined when compared to their normal operating integrative complexity baseline measurements. Reduced complexity subsequently led to the manifestation of Janis and Mann's identified dysfunctional behavior patterns.

Notably, during the acute phase of both the Berlin and Cuba crisis periods, Janis and Mann's dysfunctional behavior paths led to policy maker commitment to military action and acceptance of the risk of initiating hostilities, conflict, and war. If decision conditions of high stress and declining cognitive complexity had continued, Janis and Mann's identified dysfunctional pathologies would have probably resulted in failure to successfully resolve foreign policy crisis. In the predicament of both the 1948 Berlin and 1962 Cuba situations, the Americans could have made decisions that resulted in war.

However, as both of these foreign policy crises protracted, American decision maker integrative complexity levels improved when compared to previous crisis conditions and were accompanied by Janis and Mann's defined functional behavior pattern of vigilance. In both the Berlin and Cuba advanced crisis phases, Janis and Mann's functional behavior paths led to policy maker commitment to diplomacy, negotiation, and the promotion of peaceful policies. The continued trend of this behavior amid rising complexity generally enabled a successful resolution of foreign policy conflict and resulted in a beneficial outcome.



As decisions involving anxiety manifested during various phases of each crisis, integrative complexity was effectively utilized to independently measure decision conditions of psychological stress that contributed to behavior that Janis and Mann associated with motivated bias in their decision making construct. This project's identification of the relationship between stress, complexity, and behavior in several case studies (i.e. the decline or increase in complexity being a measure of stress that contributed to Janis and Mann's identified dysfunctional or functional pathologies), effectively distills cognitive complexity as an independent measure of stress. Thus, integrative complexity effectively serves as an adequate measure of the conditions of emotional turmoil, internal tension, and anxiety as it relates to policy maker decisional conflict during deliberation.

The resultant measured levels of cognitive complexity in the project case studies have exhibited an association with decision making behavior in certain conditions. These results positively demonstrate that integrative complexity is an effective independent measure of decision conditions and would be useful in the reformulation of Janis and Mann's decision making model. Thus, this research has served to develop an effective independent measure of stress from which researchers can accurately evaluate the remaining portion of Janis and Mann's model when using the motivational decision making construct.

#### INTEGRATIVE COMPLEXITY APPLICATION TO FOREIGN POLICY CRISIS OUTCOME

A reformulation of the Janis and Mann construct with an independent measure of stress offers application to all foreign policy crisis situations, regardless of outcome. Utilizing a cognitive independent measure of stress in a motivational decision model enables researchers to accurately determine decision conditions while effectively analyzing behavior that contributed to decision making related to peace or war. Utilizing this novel construct, foreign policy crises outcomes can be positively or negatively associated to policy maker behavior and more specifically, properly assessed by a motivational psychological model of decision making.

Initially, the measure of cognitive complexity as an independent measure of stress can be useful in determining a decision maker's impact on situations of foreign policy crisis that were successfully resolved. To illustrate, if a policy maker's integrative complexity declined and resulted in identified dysfunctional behavior pathologies, researchers can be confident that psychological stress and its relation to behavior that is associated with motivated bias had little impact on the observed positive outcome. However, if complexity increased and resulted in Janis and Mann's functional behavior patterns, scholars can be certain that stress and its relation to behavior associated with motivated bias probably contributed to a positive resolution of the crisis. In this situation, the measure of integrative complexity makes it possible for political psychologists to determine whether or not a policy maker's behavior contributed to foreign policy crisis outcomes of peace.

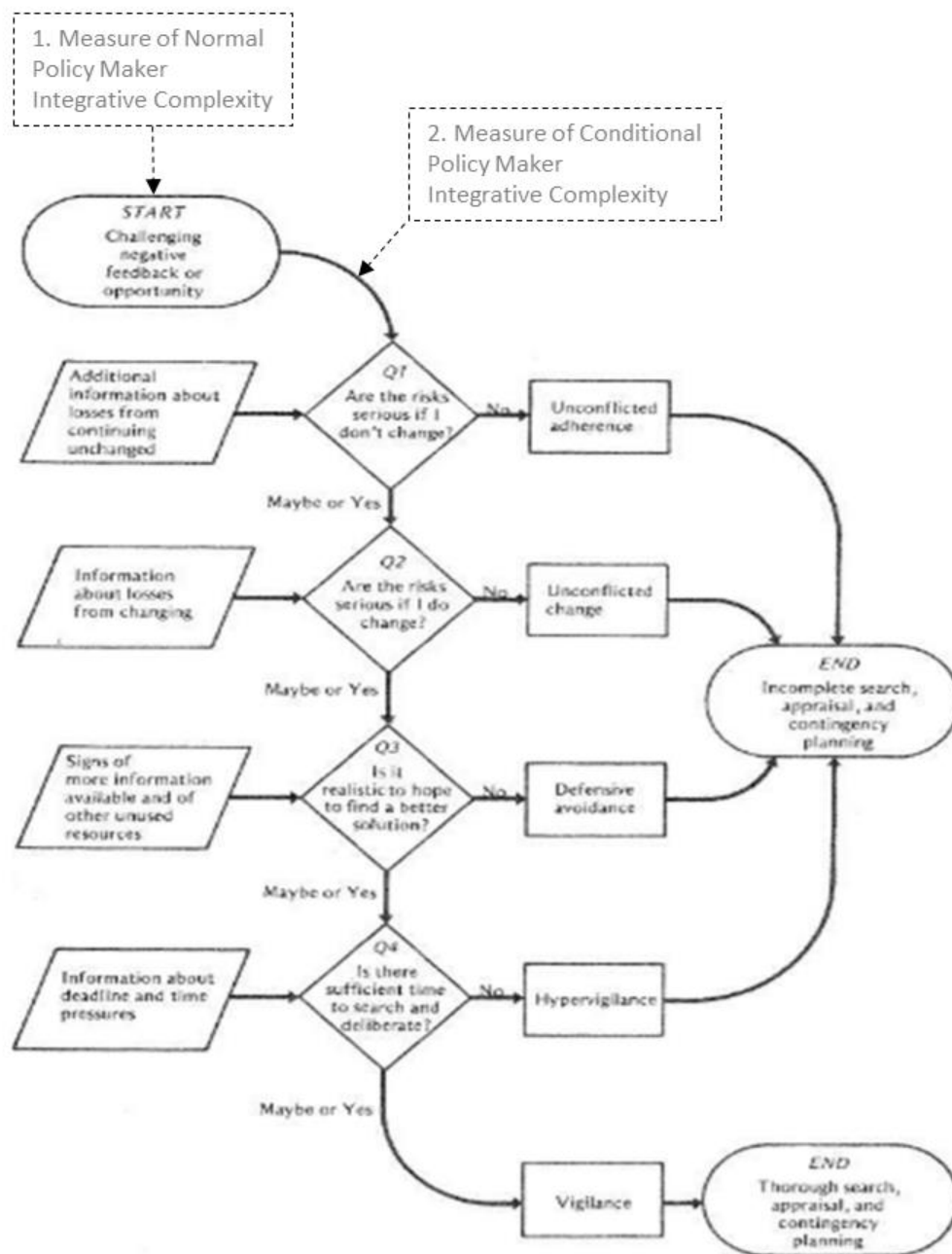
Conversely, the measure of cognitive complexity can also be leveraged in determining a decision maker's influence on foreign policy crisis situations that ended in failure. In the study of foreign policy outcomes of conflict and war, if a decision maker's complexity declined and resulted in Janis and Mann's identified

dysfunctional behavior patterns, scholars can be certain that stress and its relationship to behavior associated with motivated bias most likely contributed to an unsuccessful foreign policy solution. On the other hand, if complexity was found to increase in this situation, stress and its relationship to behavior associated with motivated bias probably had a minimal impact on the foreign policy failure. In situations of foreign policy crises that end in failure, the measure of integrative complexity makes it possible for political psychologists to determine whether or not policy maker behavior contributed to the initiation of war. This is a valuable contribution to the field of crisis decision making.

#### REFORMULATION OF THE JANIS AND MANN MOTIVATIONAL DECISION MAKING MODEL

In an effort to help remedy the problem that has been identified in Janis and Mann's model, an independent measure of stress can be added to amend the Janis and Mann construct. Specifically, in the application of an independent measure of stress to Janis and Mann's conflict theory model of decision making, a measure of integrative complexity can be added to the start of the conflict model as a measure of normal operating conditions (see Figure 2, point number 1). For any policy maker in question, it is important to establish an operational baseline of individual integrative complexity in routine operating conditions. These routine measurements can then be used as a point of reference for future integrative complexity measurements obtained throughout periods of foreign policy crises as decision conditions change.

Next, as conflicted decisions manifest during cases of foreign policy crisis, to effectively measure the decision conditions at various points of crisis, the measure of integrative complexity can be taken again (see Figure 2, point number 2). In relation to the time period of the crisis in question, this will enable political psychologists to determine whether the policy maker under consideration is operating at an integrative complexity level that is either above or below their normal baseline operating condition prior to utilizing Janis and Mann's decision making construct. As this project has demonstrated the links between stress and integrative complexity, declining complexity in relation to the baseline would indicate decision conditions of increasing stress while increasing integrative complexity in relation to the baseline would generally signify conditions of decreasing stress.



**Figure 2 – A reformulation of Janis and Mann’s Conflict Model of Decision Making using Integrative Complexity as an independent measure of stress**<sup>572</sup>

<sup>572</sup> Janis, I.L., Mann, L., *Decision Making: A Psychological Analysis of Conflict, Choice, and Commitment*, (New York: The Free Press, 1977), 70.

After the measure of conditional levels of policy maker complexity has taken place, if integrative complexity was found to decrease in comparison to previously measured conditions or the established baseline, researchers can be confident that the decision maker was operating under the influence of increasing psychological stress when answering the identified questions in Janis and Mann's decision making construct. To illustrate, if decision maker integrative complexity declined and the individual policy maker answered "no" to Janis and Mann's conflict model questions, in this case psychological stress would be related to behavior that is associated with motivated bias and would probably result in dysfunctional behavior that contributed to poor decisions. Conversely, if the decision maker answered "yes" to Janis and Mann's conflict model questions in conditions of declining integrative complexity, levels of measured psychological stress would probably not have contributed to behavior that Janis and Mann associate with motivated bias.

On the other hand, if integrative complexity was found to increase in comparison to the established baseline or previously measured conditions, research scientists can be certain that the decision maker was operating under the influence of decreasing psychological stress when answering the questions in Janis and Mann's decision making construct. In this situation, if decision maker integrative complexity increased and policy makers answered "yes" to Janis and Mann's conflict model questions, psychological stress would be associated with motivated bias and result in functional behavior that contributed to good decisions. However, if the decision maker answered "no" to Janis and Mann's conflict model questions in conditions of rising integrative complexity, even though levels of psychological stress were measured as declining, decision conditions of pressure could have positively contributed to behavior that Janis and Mann associate with motivated bias.

Alternatively, a third possibility might be that integrative complexity remained the same in relationship to the previously established normal operational baseline. Even though a decline in complexity is related to Janis and Mann's dysfunctional decision making behaviors and an increase in complexity is associated with identified functional behavior patterns, no measured or detectable change in complexity could indicate one or a number of things. Regardless of the policy maker's answer of "yes" or "no" to Janis and Mann's decision model questions, the absence of change in measured cognitive complexity scores in different phases of a crisis situation might signify the need for additional data to be collected, highlight the need for a more precise measurement of cognitive complexity in a larger data sample size, or indicate that decision conditions had in fact remained the same. In the last case, psychological stress and its contribution to behavior that Janis and Mann associate with motivated bias would have had minimal or negligible impact on the final foreign policy decision outcome. In a situation such as this, if Janis and Mann's behavior pathologies are not observed in the policy maker in question, research scientists would be able to focus on other aspects of the foreign policy crisis situation that led to outcomes of success or failure apart from motivated bias.

Therefore, these key findings illustrate that beginning with known integrative complexity as an independent measure of stress, decision conditions can be effectively measured and a determination can be made as to whether or not psychological stress was a viable factor that could have contributed to policy maker behavior and subsequent decisions when using Janis and Mann's model. With this construct, research scientists can better evaluate Janis and Mann's model to understand policy makers' behavior and the results of their decisions in relation to understanding motivated bias.

In summary, a cognitive independent measure of stress in Janis and Mann's motivational decision making model enables effective analysis of decision making behavior while bringing the cognitive and motivational attempts to apply psychological insights to the study of political behavior closer together. Although rationalist proponents have utilized historical foreign policy crises that have been resolved peacefully as evidence of rational decision making by policy makers in high stress situations, rationalists explain crises ending in violence as determined by the likelihood of war inherent in the situation itself and not attributed to the "rational" decision maker.<sup>573</sup> Considering these assertions, the result of this research project is beneficial in highlighting psychological aspects of decision making, specifically motivated bias, as important contributors to both beneficial and detrimental outcomes of foreign policy crises.<sup>574</sup> With the results of this research project, it is possible to successfully argue against rationalist claims that outcomes of foreign policy crises are either the result of rational decision making in cases of peace or other dependent situational factors in cases of war. This argument can be made specifically from a psychological perspective with a cognitive measure of stress in a motivational model of decision making.

Ultimately, this study forwards a cognitive measure of the decision making conditions of psychological stress that can better assist political scientists in determining the effectiveness of decision making behavior when using the Janis and Mann motivational model. Due to the psychological condition of anxiety that can now be measured in crisis situations through the measure of cognitive complexity, the results of this study demonstrate that motivated bias contributes to faulty policy maker behavior and decision making. Clearly, integrative complexity as an independent measure of stress is an important addition to a motivational model to better assist political scientists in determining whether decision making behavior is associated with psychological stress and also whether motivated bias contributed to final outcomes of foreign policy crises. Ultimately, the results of this project offer a novel contribution to the psychological approach in the field of decision making demonstrating that both cognitive and motivational aspects of conflicted choices are contributors to some of the reasons that decisions go wrong.

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<sup>573</sup> Oneal, J.R.. *The Rationality of Decision Making during International Crises*, *Polity*. The University of Chicago Press, 1988. Vol. 20, No. 4, 598-622.

<sup>574</sup> Shlaim, A. *The United States and the Berlin Blockade, 1948-1949: A Study in Crisis Decision Making*. University of California Press, 1983. 409-410, 619.

## CHAPTER 8 – CONCLUSION

The main focus of this project was to render the Janis and Mann construct more useful when evaluating policy maker behavior in the study of conflicted choice. The preceding chapter achieved this objective by incorporating a cognitive measure of stress into Janis and Mann’s “conflict model” of decision making. This final chapter will briefly summarize the strategic perspective of the study, highlight lessons learned during the data gathering and research phases, and capture opportunities for additional research that became evident over the duration of the project.

### SUMMARY OF RESEARCH

Considering the problem of circularity present in the work of Irving Janis and Leon Mann’s conflict model of decision making, an independent measure of stress would be useful in application to the study of crisis decisions when using the model. The study of cognitive complexity can be offered as a solution to the circularity found in the Janis and Mann construct. Thus, this project focused on the research and measurement of integrative complexity of American policy makers over distinct phases of two historical crises that ended in peaceful resolution. Initially, average policy maker integrative complexity levels were established during time periods preceding the initiation of crisis, specifically for the purpose of establishing an operational baseline reference for integrative complexity measurements after the onset of crisis.

During the specific foreign policy crisis cases studied, the initiation of crisis brought a decline in integrative complexity scores among the policy makers examined. A decline in cognitive complexity is an independent measure of stress and thus avoids the circularity of Janis and Mann’s formulation. Without exception, evidence of stress and anxiety produced instances of Janis and Mann’s dysfunctional decision making behaviors that had negative consequences for foreign policy execution (sudden decisions to commit to military action in Berlin and Cuba), and could have resulted in a situation of crisis conflict.

As the periods of crisis matured however, advanced crisis brought an increase in cognitive complexity scores across the decision makers. Measurements of integrative complexity were again used as an independent measure of stress to avoid Janis and Mann’s circularity, and increasing complexity indicated a decline in anxiety levels across the policy makers. A decrease of stress and anxiety produced Janis and Mann’s functional behavior patterns. These pathologies led to beneficial consequences for the conduct of foreign policy to avoid war (continuation of the Berlin airlift through peaceful means and negotiation with the Soviets to remove Moscow’s missiles from Cuba), and resulted in outcomes of crisis resolution and peace.

This study of cognitive complexity, when linked with decision conditions of stress and examples of Janis and Mann’s identified behavior pathologies in the selected case studies, exhibited a viable independent measure

of stress. Assuming a relationship between complexity and stress, cognitive complexity was then used as an independent measure of stress in the reformulation of Janis and Mann's decision making construct to expunge the identified problem of circularity and make the Janis and Mann model more useful to researchers in the field of crisis decision making. The conclusion of this study presented a useful motivational conflict model of choice revised with a cognitive measure of decision conditions to combine the research programs of cognitive and motivational psychology.

## LESSONS LEARNED

The study of integrative complexity in this project was performed using the research protocols of Dr. Peter Suedfeld, Professor Emeritus of the Psychology Department at the University of British Columbia (UBC). The specific task of scoring decision maker integrative complexity proved to be an intricate and challenging undertaking. Integrative complexity coding required many hours of focused work to analyze a set number of verbal extracts for the purposes of assigning accurate integrative complexity codes. The extensive time required was partly due to the individual analysis of distinct aspects of policy maker conceptual differentiation and integration within each of the verbal extracts and also due to the sheer volume of passages that required separate individual scoring.

To expound briefly on each case, at least 30 verbal extracts of various length were taken from archival research for each decision maker studied, for each of the three separate phases of crisis that were examined. For a single policy maker studied over three phases of just one case study including pre-crisis, acute crisis, and advanced crisis, at least 90 individual paragraphs of material were scored for each distinct phase. On average, each decision maker studied consumed 10 hours of complexity coding work across each case per individual coder completing the scoring work. This number multiplied by three decision makers for a single case resulted in 270 separate paragraphs of material that was scored three times by separate trained integrative complexity scorers for an average of 90 hours of analytical work.

In summarization of both cases regarding integrative complexity scoring, 540 verbal/written extracts were scored on three separate occasions. Between three individual coders scoring 1,620 passages in total, integrative complexity coding work consumed more than 180 hours of rigorous integrative complexity analysis across the project. Needless to say, this part of the project took significant organization and careful attention to detail. Although time consuming, in-depth analytical work was required for accuracy in scoring extract passages according to the comprehensive and detailed criteria for assessing integrative complexity of data obtained in an archival setting.<sup>575</sup>

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<sup>575</sup> Baker-Brown, G., Ballard, E. J., Bluck, S., deVries, B., Suedfeld, P., Tetlock, P. E. The conceptual/integrative complexity scoring manual, *Motivation and personality: Handbook of thematic content analysis*, edited by C.P. Smith, 1992, 400-418.

While each of the trained individual coders had diverse scoring experience levels, the individual coders came to an acceptable level of inter-coder agreement with respect to overall integrative complexity scores. Summary scores across the project exhibited a percentage of agreement between a majority of the coders greater than 85% (87.40%), and a percentage of agreement within +/-1 point of 91.85%. With respect to academic standards for scoring integrative complexity, Dr. Suedfeld's Behavioral Research Lab at UBC has set the benchmark of inter-coder agreement at 85% to determine effective scoring. Thus, the data set compiled and scored was assessed to be accurate and within acceptable tolerances of error for the purposes of effectively measuring policy maker integrative complexity of decision makers in an archival setting.<sup>576</sup>

Comparative analysis of measured integrative complexity levels to historical examples of dysfunctional foreign policy crisis behavior as defined by Janis and Mann, proved to be extremely challenging and at the same time rewarding. This task involved countless hours of detailed research through the national archives in Washington, D.C. and the respective U.S. Presidential Libraries in Boston, Massachusetts, and Independence, Missouri. Thorough investigation was required to uncover personal statements, notes, memos, papers, and press statements that were made by the American decision makers in question.

Intriguing was the finding that the particular strategic crises selected were well suited for the study of integrative complexity due to heavy documentation of the cases during their respective time periods. This provided adequate amounts of archival material necessary for integrative complexity coding for each decision maker in the separate foreign policy situations. American historical archives held extremely detailed accounts of many of the decision makers in question and the U.S. Presidential Library Archives even had speeches delivered by both President Truman and Kennedy with the Presidents' personal hand written notes and edits in the margins. Archives at the U.S. Department of State also held detailed microfiche files of official Secretary of State position statements made to the press by Secretaries' George Marshall and Dean Rusk.

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Over the course of the project, in-depth research of individual integrative complexity served to highlight areas that would benefit from continued growth and opportunities that justify new research. In building a productive case utilizing cognitive complexity in the study of motivational psychology, this research project forwards initial findings that merit expansion. Additional research, data collection and analysis are needed to substantiate this project's claims and reinforce cognitive complexity as an independent measure of stress in Janis and Mann's motivational model.

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<sup>576</sup> Baker-Brown, G., Ballard, E. J., Bluck, S., deVries, B., Suedfeld, P., Tetlock, P. E. The conceptual/integrative complexity scoring manual, *Motivation and personality: Handbook of thematic content analysis*, edited by C.P. Smith, 1992, 400-418.



To illustrate, the Janis and Mann conflict model is more useful now that an independent measure of stress has been found. Decision conditions of stress can now be measured apart from other aspects of crisis decision making and this project served to demonstrate the link between stress and individual performance. Notably, the effects of high psychological stress and low performance were apparent in all the foreign policy crises examined across this study. The same circumstances may exist in other crisis situations and this certainly merits further research.

This project also included the substantive finding that time is a critical variable during periods of foreign policy crisis. The study demonstrated that the more time policy makers had to accustom themselves to a foreign policy crisis situation, the more their psychological stress levels declined; this in turn contributed to more effective decision making behavior. Re-emphasizing the link between stress and individual performance, the decline of psychological stress and its beneficial effects were also apparent in the cases that were examined in this project. This finding also deserves additional study as this particular discovery may be evident in other important foreign policy crises throughout history.

Along these lines, from a broad perspective, further study of decision conditions related to the most significant cases of historical foreign policy crisis certainly justify continued examination in an effort to assess increases in decision making stress and its relation to performance. To date, the study of cognitive complexity has not been conducted among central individual decision makers in key strategic foreign policy crises over the course of modern history. Understanding individual decision making conditions in large scale strategic crises will positively contribute to an effort to learn more than we currently know about how individual psychological stress levels affected decision making performance.

During the conduct of this research project, sources of stress related to conflicted decision making were found that had corresponding consequences for the conduct of foreign policy during crisis. To illustrate, during the acute phase of both American foreign policy crises studied, key leaders were preoccupied with perceived threatening developments that they thought would result in substantial foreign policy and domestic political losses. The presence of conflicted decisions concerning what to do about the crisis situations resulted in a significant source of psychological stress for the American decision makers, and this led to a corresponding rise in anxiety levels.

In these situations of high stress during acute crisis, American decision making performance declined. Considering this project's reliance on Janis and Mann's conflict model of decision making, the sources of stress that were found and the different consequences that resulted can be understood when placed in the context of the Janis and Mann construct. Assessment of Janis and Mann's model demonstrates that although the Americans were aware of significant risks, in situations of elevated stress they believed that it was not realistic to hope for a better solution based on the circumstances and this led to identified dysfunctional

behavior pathologies. An increase in psychological stress resulted in an incomplete search, appraisal, and inadequate contingency planning that had negative consequences for the conduct of American foreign policy as the United States committed to military intervention. In the crises studied, stress produced leadership dysfunctional behavior pathologies that contributed to trends that would have eventually resulted in foreign policy crisis failure.

Continuing illustration across this project, during advanced phases of the crises, the central U.S. leaders steadily perceived the foreign policy crisis situations to be within their control. The corresponding absence of conflicted foreign policy decision conditions was a source of reduction in psychological stress levels for the Americans and this led to a decline in anxiety among the key policy makers. Notably, the key American decision makers gained confidence and relaxed slightly over time.

In the situations of reduced psychological stress during advanced crisis, American decision making performance improved. Given the project's reliance on Janis and Mann's construct of decision making, the sources of stress and the different consequences that resulted can continue to be understood when placed in the context of the Janis and Mann model. Further assessment of Janis and Mann's model exhibits that although key U.S. leaders believed that they faced serious risks, in situations of reduced stress the Americans thought that it was realistic to hope for a better solution and there was sufficient time to search, deliberate, and find an adequate response. A decline in psychological stress resulted in a thorough search, appraisal, and sufficient contingency planning that had positive consequences for the conduct of U.S. foreign policy as the Americans implemented alternative solutions in place of continued military action. The reduction of stress produced decision maker functional behavior paths that contributed to trends that eventually resulted in successful foreign policy crisis resolution.

Thus, the predominant sources of stress in this project were related to conflicted decisions in situations of foreign policy crisis. Depending upon the severity of stress and anxiety levels, the consequences varied. High stress related to conflicted decisions contributed to poor decision making performance. Conversely, reduced stress related to improved conditions of minimized decision conflict resulted in better decision making performance. Nonetheless, given the sources of variable stress found across this project, assessment of the Janis and Mann model demonstrates respective behavior pathologies that eventually contributed to a potential cause of conflict in crisis but also its eventual peaceful resolution.

Additional research in different cases of foreign policy crisis would be beneficial to understanding sources of psychological stress and their consequences pertaining to crisis outcome. Further study of various foreign policy crises in history could effectively assess the Janis and Mann construct for the purposes of examining conflicted decisions and their consequences to the conduct of foreign policy and its end state. From this perspective, examining sources of stress related to conflicted decision making, leadership performance, and

the consequences for foreign policy execution will help to better understand diverse outcomes of both crisis failure and its successful resolution.

Nonetheless, while this study considered the first part of Janis and Mann's model, focusing on the rise of stress and its impact upon policy maker behavior performance, it did not focus on the second half of the construct. Further study is certainly needed on the second part of Janis and Mann's conflict decision making construct pertaining to the functionality of policy maker behavior related to conflicted decisions during crisis. Combined academic work on both parts of Janis and Mann's construct would bolster the effectiveness of the model and help to understand the conditions of psychological stress and anxiety generated over conflicted decision making, the specific foreign policy behaviors caused by stress, and the relationships that exist to required foreign policy decisions. Future efforts would complete focused research across the Janis and Mann model and render the construct more effective to better understand foreign policy crisis conflicted decision making.

Even though this project focused on case studies at the strategic level of foreign policy success, further research on the effects of psychological stress in other significant operational and tactical cases of failure would merit additional study in an effort to replicate the findings of this project across different types and scales of crisis. To illustrate, political crises that ended in failure such as U.S. President Richard Nixon's resignation in 1974 after the American Watergate political scandal created very high levels of anxiety and psychological stress. Nixon himself commented about the crisis, "Not knowing how to act or not being able to act, is what tears your insides out..."<sup>577</sup> American President Johnson's handling of the Vietnam War was judged to be an incredible foreign policy failure that was associated with significant levels of decision conflict and psychological stress that led to dysfunctional decision making. Different operational cases of significant policy maker psychological stress and conflicted decision making that merit mention are the 1982 Falklands war between Argentina and the United Kingdom that protracted for 74 lengthy days, and also the Suez Crisis of 1956 when Israel, the United Kingdom and France invaded the Sinai only to withdraw after the fighting began due to external political pressure. Both crises were characterized by humiliating end states for the invaders and resulted in dramatic operational failures that had opposite the intended effect of their associated foreign policy aims.

Now that the Janis and Mann model of conflict decision making has been revised with an independent measure of stress, with the right kind of documentation it is now possible to examine foreign policy crisis situations and measure individual psychological decision conditions, apart from other aspects of crisis decision making. In this manner, individual policy maker levels of anxiety can be studied and understood in isolation while other aspects of foreign policy situations can be placed into focus to determine other causes

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<sup>577</sup> Janis, I.L., Mann, L. *Decision Making: A Psychological Analysis of Conflict, Choice, and Commitment*, (New York: The Free Press, 1977), 47.

of crisis. This application certainly brings the cognitive and motivational approaches of the psychological discipline closer together, offers an avenue to better understand the emotional aspects of crisis decision making apart from other details, and affords researchers the opportunity to focus research on other areas of crisis situations that could have contributed to success or failure.

Another valuable opportunity related to this project that is possible through further academic study is focused examination of individual cognitive complexity of policy makers during conditions of normal or routine foreign policy conduct over time. A focus on collecting and scoring archival material of key historical policy makers during these kinds of periods would support development and eventual refinement of integrative complexity performance baselines for important future studies of key individual policy makers in history. Individual policy makers often operate within a specific range of integrative complexity scores under normal conditions and further research would refine the performance levels unique to specific decision makers. From the outset, this would help familiarize new researchers to average complexity of individual policy makers during routine conditions and ground new research findings on firmly established data from which initial analytical deductions can be based when psychological stress becomes evident. Established complexity baselines would also help political scientists to better evaluate foreign policy crisis situations when they arise and enable refined insight on policy maker psychological stress levels that are related to key decisions that could have contributed to outcomes of peace or war.

## FINAL CONCLUSION

Although crisis decision making goes right or wrong for myriad reasons, this study has successfully demonstrated that psychological stress is in fact related to decision making behavior that Janis and Mann's conflict model associates with motivated bias. Although decision makers sometimes have the best intentions when making decisions under pressure, their choices are sometimes affected by the motivated bias that Janis and Mann's construct describes. While motivated bias is just one of the reasons that decisions go wrong, it is a flaw that can only be ameliorated with increased study, awareness and understanding.

While cognitive and motivational models both provide distinct and valuable contributions to the psychological approach to decision making, motivated bias caused by decision related stress can be better understood through cognitive means. Thus, this project offers a cognitive measure of stress in a motivational model to improve our understanding of the role of motivated bias in crisis decision making. Through an independent measure of psychological stress, decision conditions can be measured and then positively or negatively attributed to decision maker motivated bias in foreign policy crisis.

Depending on the results when using Janis and Mann's revised model, decision maker motivated bias can be attributed to specific foreign policy crises over the course of history. In cases of the outbreak of violence and

sudden war, one of the causes of conflict can be linked to unique decision conditions and specific individual decision makers. This is an important finding as major policy makers' decision making during crisis has resulted in large scale atrocities that have continued throughout history and into the present day.

Conversely, crisis resolution through peaceful means can be associated with specific decision conditions and also attributed to individual decision makers. This is also an important discovery as foreign policy crises of the worst kind imaginable have been successfully resolved; thus, there is hope for tomorrow. Through these important claims we can better discern decision conditions of foreign policy crisis and come to truly understand one of the paramount causes of conflict, and recognize an even more important cause for peace.

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